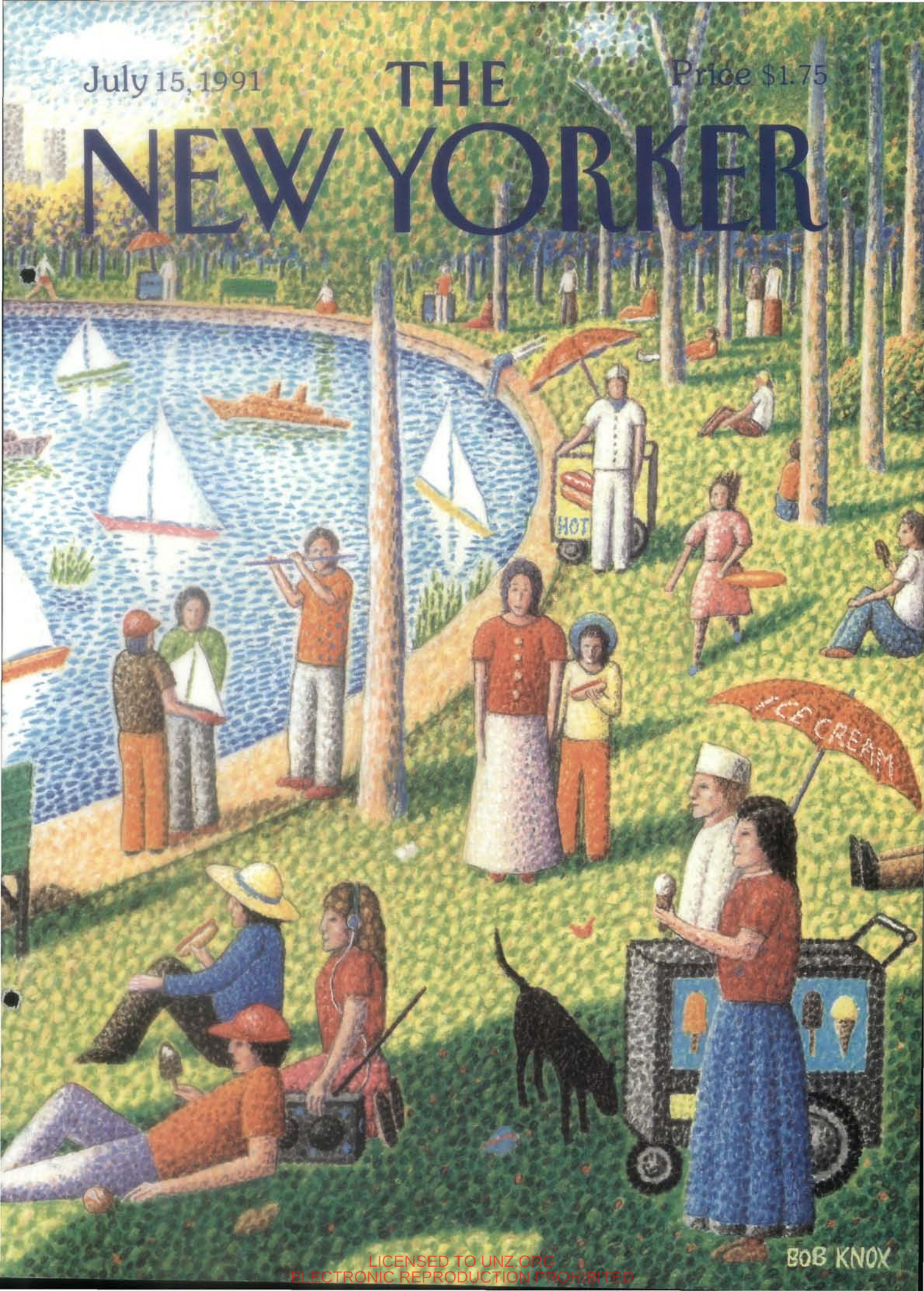

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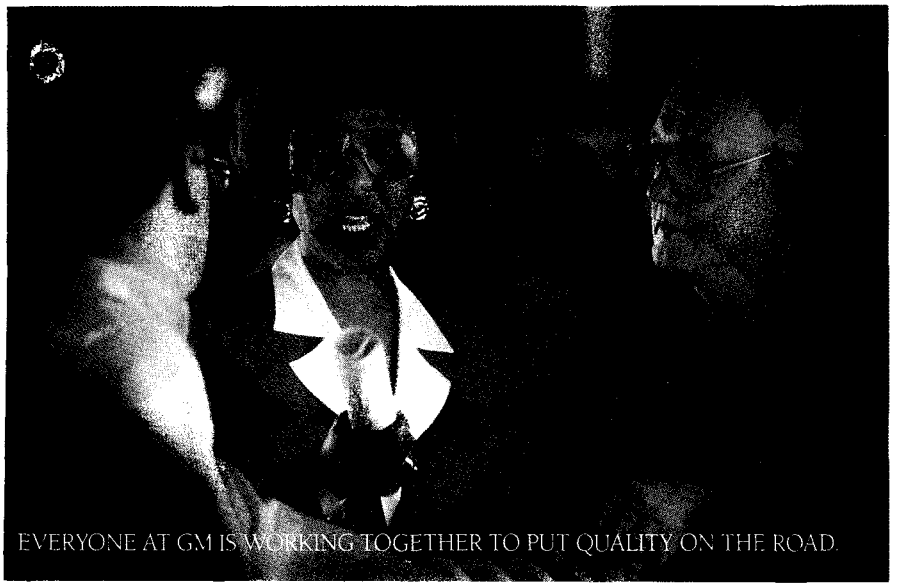

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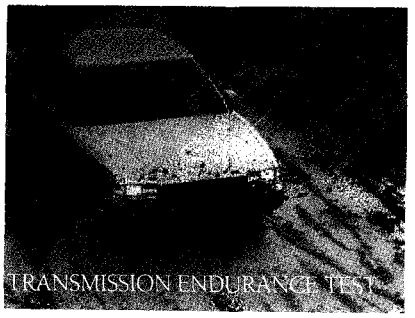

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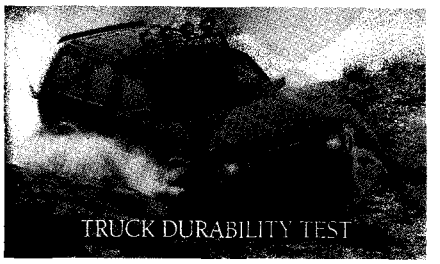

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

WE'VE always been pretty upfront about our hero-worship of Gerard Alessandrini, author and creator of the long-running and ever-changing musical spoof "Forbidden Broadway." Indeed, when it comes to providing succinct and probing commentary on contemporary culture, the only person in our book who even comes close to Alessandrini is the guy who writes the daily television listings in the *Times*. So we were nonplussed by the latest edition of the show, which seemed a little off the mark.

Make no mistake: going to see "Forbidden Broadway 1991½" is still a lot of fun—more fun, say, than not going to see it. Among the show's high points are Herndon Lackey poking fun at Topol, to the tune of "If I Were a Rich Man" ("If I sing it slo-wer . . ."); Herndon Lackey poking fun at the score of "Les Mis" ("God, it's high / This song's too high . . .")—an old number, actually; and Herndon Lackey poking fun at "Aspects of Love" ("I, I sleep with everyone . . .") while he and the rest of the cast stand, apparently naked, behind a sheet, "Oh! Calcutta!"-style. If Mr. Lackey is the only member of the cast who seems at all funny it's because he's the only one playing deadpan. The others—Jeff Lyons, Mary Denise Bentley, and Susanne Blakeslee—are constantly nudging and winking at the audience. Weak singers both, the two young women perform in a style that seems to buy into Broadway's aesthetic rather than sending it up.

Traditionally, what has characterized the style of "Forbidden Broadway" is either the seeming solemnity that Mr. Lackey sustains so well or the kind of loopiness that found its apotheosis in Toni DiBuono. Traditionally, Alessandrini's targets have been general hypocrisies rather than specific individuals. Yet much in the current version seems mean-spirited, and written by someone who hadn't seen the shows. Why, for example, does the "Assassins" item ("You can't get a hit with a gun") make it sound as though "Assassins" were a *good* show? Why dump on "Once on This Island" for having low production values? Why does the season's favorite piece of retrogradiana—"The Will Rogers Follies"—get off virtually scot-free? And where, oh where, are the sendups of "La Bête" and that most bogus of recent critical hits, "Our Country's Good"? It's as if Alessandrini were suddenly going after the wrong thing. We hope to see "Forbidden Broadway" back on track before too long. Everybody has their off days, and even Sondheim nods, but we can't afford to have Alessandrini go to sleep on us.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

A Rendezvous with God—Avi Hoffman stars in Miriam Hoffman's play, with music, about the Yiddish poet Itsik Manger. Directed by Sue Lawless. Previews through July 13. Opens July 14 at 3. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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OPENED RECENTLY

Alice '91—An adaptation of Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking-Glass," which was written by David S. Macy and Susan B. Reinhard. Presented by the Kings County Shakespeare Company. (Alfred T. White Memorial, Brooklyn Botanic Garden. July 13-14 at 2. No tickets necessary.)

And the World Goes 'Round: The Songs of Kander & Ebb—A musical revue, with Joel Blum, Bob Cuccioli, Karen Mason, Terry Burrell, and Karen Ziëmba. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Body and Soul—David Boldt and Randall Denman have the leads in John Glines' gay romantic comedy. Mr. Glines also directed. (Courtyard Playhouse, 39 Grove St. 869-3530.)

Breaking Legs—The Mafia meets Off Broadway. Philip Bosco and Vincent Gardenia can seldom have been funnier than as a pair of mobsters who back a new play in order to win a young dramatist for Gardenia's daughter. Tom Dulack wrote the comedy; John Tillinger directed it. With Larry Storch, Nicolas Surovy, and, above all, Sue Giosa as the daughter who spins the plot. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/3/91.) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Jeff Lyons in "Forbidden Broadway 1991½"

Charge It, Please—A comedy by Carlos Gorbea. Three performances a week are in English; four are in Spanish. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes July 28.)

Circle Repertory Company—The final play of the season is **The Balcony Scene**, by Wil Calhoun. With Jonathan Hogan, Cynthia Nixon, and William Fichtner. The director was Michael Warren Powell. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Closes July 28.)

Club Soda—A comedy by Leah Kornfeld Friedman, which is set in 1947 Brooklyn. Dan Futterman, Aaron Harnick, Katherine Hiler, Patricia Mauceri, Lenny Venito, Alanna Ubach, and Danny Zorn make up the cast. Pamela Berlin directed. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

Getting Married—A production of Shaw's comedy, directed by Stephen Porter. The cast includes Victoria Tennant, Nicolas Coster, Simon Jones, Madeleine Potter, Linda Thorson, Lee Richardson, Scott Wentworth, and J. D. Cullum. (7/8/91) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

Gypsy—The Tyne Daly-led revival of the great Laurents-Styne-Sondheim musical has returned to Broadway for a limited engagement. It is so delightful—and the cast so engaging—that we think anyone would be happier for having seen it. One suggestion: don't applaud when Mama Rose comes down the aisle (you'll drown out the first number). (12/4/89) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

The Haunted Host and **Safe Sex**—A double bill consisting of a 1964 comedy by Robert Patrick and a revised 1987 comedy by Harvey Fierstein. Mr. Fierstein and Jason Workman make up the cast of both plays. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Closes July 14.)

Lips Together, Teeth Apart—Two couples share a beach house on Fire Island over the Fourth of July weekend, in Terrence McNally's very funny play about a number of serious matters. Nathan Lane, Christine Baranski, Anthony Heald, and Swoosie Kurtz are the incomparable actors. (7/8/91) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

Lost in Yonkers—There's not one glimmer of honesty or authenticity in this family melodrama by Neil Simon. Set in Yonkers during the Second World War, it's about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (3/11/91) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

Love Lemmings—A satirical comedy revue by Joe DiPietro. With Steve Ahern, John Daggett, Helen Greenberg, and Kathryn Rossetter. Directed by Melia Bensussen. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

Lusting After Pipino's Wife—A comedy by Sam Henry Kass. (45th Street Theatre, 354 W. 45th St. 564-8038.)

Mambo Mouth—John Leguizamo portrays seven Hispanic characters in a one-man show. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

Miss Saigon—Oh, the horror! The horror! (4/29/91) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)

Mr. Gogol and Mr. Preen—Elaine May's play about the relationship between an aging New York writer (Mike Nussbaum) and a vacuum-cleaner salesman (William H. Macy) is sweet, funny, and poignant. It shows the two actors at their best and is rather like a road movie, with Nussbaum and Macy as Bing and Bob, and Zohra Lampert as a sort of *mitteleuropäische* Dorothy Lamour. Instead of being about sex and show business, the jokes here are about philosophy, politics, and the problem of definitions. (6/24/91) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Othello—The first of three plays in the New York Shakespeare Festival's free summer series in the Park. Raul Julia and Christopher Walken lead the cast. Directed by Joe Dowling. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Delacorte, Central Park near W. 81st St. Closes July 14. For information about tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

Pageant—A musical spoof of beauty contests. Book and lyrics by Bill Russell and Frank Kelly and music by Albert Evans. Conceived and directed by Robert Longbottom. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 262-3333.)

Prom Queens Unchained—A musical by Larry Goodsight, Keith Herrmann, and Stephen Witkin. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

Red Scare on Sunset—Charles Busch wrote and stars in this comedy about an actress battling Communism in nineteen-fifties Hollywood. Directed by Kenneth Elliott. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

The Secret Garden—This lovely musical adaptation of the classic children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett isn't just a kiddie show. Subtle, charming, intelligent, and wholly literary in its approach to adaptation, it manages both to be faithful to the spirit of the book and to comment on the particular moment in time that produced it. (5/13/91) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

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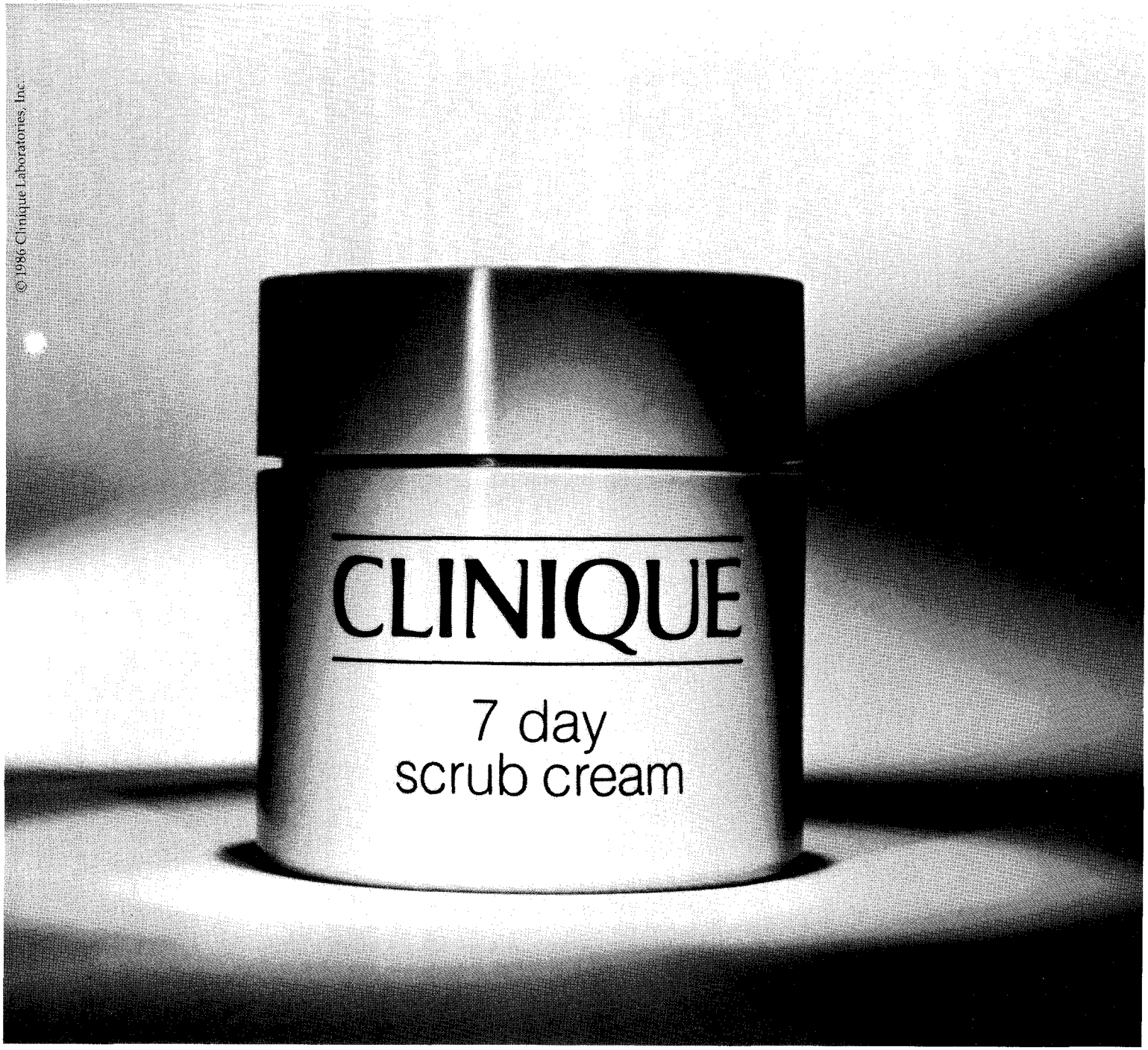

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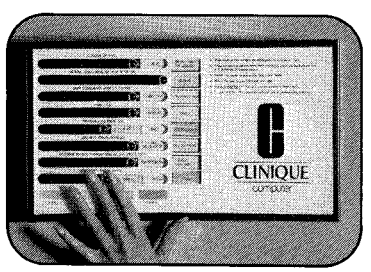

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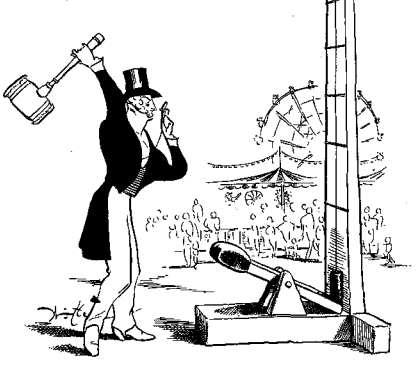
THE THEATRE–Cont'd

SONG OF SINGAPORE—A musical with a promising concept: turn a Polish veterans' hall into a Singapore night club, circa 1941, and spill murder and mayhem onto the premises. Unfortunately, the lavish settings (by John Lee Beatty) and the musical talent (led by the winsome and versatile Donna Murphy) cannot conceal a very thin story and a host of excruciatingly bad jokes. Another problem: on a busy night the seating arrangements here can be extremely cramped. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 228-0844.)

THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES—The sets by Tony Walton, the direction and choreography by Tommy Tune, the costumes by Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are neglected. Keith Carradine makes an engaging, amusing Rogers, but that is not enough, despite Cy Coleman's pleasant score. (5/13/91) (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

LONG RUNS

CATS: Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **CITY OF ANGELS:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; and Michael Blakemore, director, all are in top form in this jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turned thirty-one in May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1991½:** This newly revised revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.) . . . **GRAND HOTEL:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **ONCE ON THIS ISLAND:** A musical by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION:** You're best off knowing nothing about the John Guare play other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright, director Jerry Zaks, and actress Stockard Channing. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.) . . . **THE SUM OF US:** David Stevens' poignant comedy about how hard it is for parents and children to break free of each other (particularly if they get on too well) is set in present-day Australia. Depending on how you look at it, the play is either very dear and rather flawed or rather dear and very flawed. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)



DANCE

IN many productions of "Swan Lake," there is a moment when the hero, Siegfried, kneels, and the heroine, Odette, stands in attitude on his raised thigh. Her arms are extended above her head and her face is tilted up toward the light. The moment, apparently so simple, incorporates diverse ideas. If you look at it as a visual image, Odette seems to be flying away from Siegfried. If you look at it as the dramatic expression of physical engineering, you see that Odette has made Siegfried the very floor on which she stands. If you look at it as an emblem of meaning, you see two people conjoined to make something larger than either alone could project, and the agitated swans that frame them only point up their statuary integrity. Such a pose practically announces itself as ballet on a grand scale: passionate, Romantic, a little dangerous, and whipped by a storm that Tchaikovsky composed.

Now, say the weather is calm, the night is still, and the pose is more oblique in character. Say, too, that you glimpse it from afar, at an unusual angle, while you listen to the metric of acid rain. This is the bittersweet dream world of "Scènes de Ballet," Frederick Ashton's storyless work of 1947. In both its choreography and music, a repertoire of nineteenth-century works seems to hover just out of reach. Stravinsky wrote the score in 1944, for Anton Dolin and Alicia Markova, and his surviving outline refers to "Giselle," "Swan Lake," and "Coppélia." David Vaughan, Ashton's biographer, observes in the choreography analogies to Petipa, especially "The Sleeping Beauty." But Ashton wanted to do more than refer to authority: he also wanted to take risks. "I, who at school could never get on with algebra or geometry, suddenly got fascinated with geometrical figures," the choreographer told Mr. Vaughan. "I used a lot of theorems as ground patterns for 'Scènes de Ballet.' . . . So I did these geometric figures that are not always facing front. . . . We would get into terrible tangles, but when it finally came out I used to say, 'Q.E.D.!' "

This week, the Royal Ballet opens at the Met with a full-length "Swan Lake" and a mixed bill containing "Scènes de Ballet."

IN TOWN

ROYAL BALLET—In a two-week engagement. July 8 at 7:30; July 9 at 8; July 13 at 2 and 8; and July 15-17 at 8: "Swan Lake." . . . ¶ July 10-12 at 8: "Scènes de Ballet," "Winter Dreams" (American première), and "'Still Life' at the Penguin Café" (New York première). (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Continues through July 20.)

"FULL CIRCLE"—Two programs of contemporary dance that benefit Women in Need. July 10 at 8: Stephan Koplowitz, Susan Marshall, Gina Gibney, the Urban Bush Women, and Molissa Fenley. . . . ¶ July 11 at 8: Bebe Miller, Gina Gibney, JoAnn Fregalette Jansen, Claire Porter, Carol Clements, and Liz Lehrman. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. For tickets, call 695-4758.)

"DANCES FOR WAVE HILL"—Site-specific works presented by Wendy Perron, Sara Rudner, and Jennifer Monson. (Wave Hill, Independence Ave. at 249th St., the Bronx. July 13-14 at 4. No charge beyond admission to the grounds.)

NINA WIENER—With her company in "Harmonic Landscapes." The duo of Art Bridgman and Myrna Packer will also perform. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playground, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 12 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

OUT OF TOWN

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Opening performances of the Saratoga season, which will run through July 27. July 10 and July 12 at 8:15, and July 11 and July 13 at 2 and 8:15: "The Sleeping Beauty." . . . ¶ July 16 at 8:15: "Chaconne," "La Valse," and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto." . . . ¶ July 17 at 8:15: "Bugaku," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Western Symphony." (Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Saratoga Springs. 1-518 587-3330.)

JACOB'S PILLOW—The Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, July 9-13. . . . ¶ Ballet Chicago, July 16-20. (Becket, Mass. 1-413 243-0745.)

NIGHT LIFE

RICHARD THOMPSON has made a career of not selling records. The singer-guitarist's 1971 solo début, "Henry the Human Fly," is rumored to have been the biggest flop in Warner Brothers' history. Even "Shoot Out the Lights," which Thompson recorded with his then-wife, Linda, and which is generally perceived to be his masterpiece, has sold only a hundred and fifty thousand copies to date—not many for a record that *Rolling Stone* recently picked as the ninth-best album of the eighties. Thompson's tough, earthy singing and his lean guitar solos can now be heard on his new album, "Rumor and Sigh." It's a good, solid record and it has received unanimous praise—most rock critics would run into a burning building for any Richard Thompson album. "Rumor and Sigh" probably won't win Thompson a mainstream audience—the sad truth is that perhaps nothing will—but the few and proud can see him perform at the Ritz on July 9.

Opening for Thompson will be the young folksinger Shawn Colvin. We saw Colvin play at the Bottom Line some time ago, and over the months since then we've thought a lot about her performance. We remember her modified Beatles haircut, her lovely, quiet rendition of Talking Heads' "This Must Be the Place," and, more than anything else, the fact that at one point she interrupted her set to call a friend long-distance and play a song into her answering machine. This last bit was utterly giddy and spontaneous—a classic Bottom Line moment. Colvin accompanied herself on acoustic guitar, and her self-effacing stage persona added just the right touch of whimsy to the darkly pretty songs found on her début record, "Steady On." Toward the end of the show, after a string of what she ac-

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knowledged were somewhat depressing songs, Colvin laughed and told the audience to prepare themselves for an even *more* depressing song. "Don't worry," she said. "I'm a professional. I know what I'm doing."

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Abilene Café, 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (255-7373)—A reincarnated blues bar: the first Abilene led a low-profile life in the East Twenties until 1987; this one opened last year. The club, which is spacious, cheerful, and plain, won't win any prizes for atmosphere, but it has all the ingredients of a good blues bar: cheap grub, a modest cover charge, and a non-trendy crowd.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—A quirky, endearing Village watering hole, perpetually decorated for the holidays—all of them. The musicians work in the back of the room, in a well ringed by a bar—a setup that seems to bring out the latent show-biz tendencies in some of the bar's patrons. Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy, Fridays and Saturdays to Mabel Godwin, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band. Music from nine-thirty.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A tony cabaret attained by passing through an opulent tapas restaurant, where wicker baskets overflow with fruit and vegetables and a row of hams hang over the bar; if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. July 9-13, the club belongs to former "Saturday Night Live" comic **Terry Sweeney,** who'll be doing his now famous Nancy Reagan impersonation in a show called "It's Still My Turn." The evening ends with Sweeney's Nancy singing new lyrics to "Rose's Turn," from "Gypsy." **Natalie Carter** appears on July 14. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—The jazz personnel turns over nearly every night at this airy, loftlike restaurant-bar, in the gray zone between Zabar's and Columbia. Some may cry gentrification at the sight of the pastel walls, the potted greenery, and the bar crowded with Frascati sippers, but the floor-to-ceiling windows make for some fine Broadway-viewing. The **Mike Longo** trio will be here July 16-18. Music from nine. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A jazz club that would be a perfect stop on a bus tour (there's even a souvenir shop that sells Kodak). It's a good idea to make a reservation and show up well in advance. **Herbie Mann and Jasil Brazz** hold forth July 9-14, with Dori Caymmi. The Argentine tenor saxophonist **Gato Barbieri** begins a week's work on July 16. First set at nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. The walls and columns are basic black with some rainbow detailing here and there—the place looks a little like the outside of a van. The lush, whispery English pop trio **Frazier Chorus,** who recently released an album titled "Ray," come in on July 12. The one-man band known as **Taj Mahal** is in evidence on July 10. He has a rich, scratchy voice, plays everything from romping barrelhouse piano to lulling finger-picking guitar, and is given to wearing panama hats. Traditional country blues are his strongest suit, and he delivers them with such clarity and ease that you feel as if you were sitting on a backwoods porch. **Kris Kristofferson** takes hold on July 15. Shows at eight and eleven. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

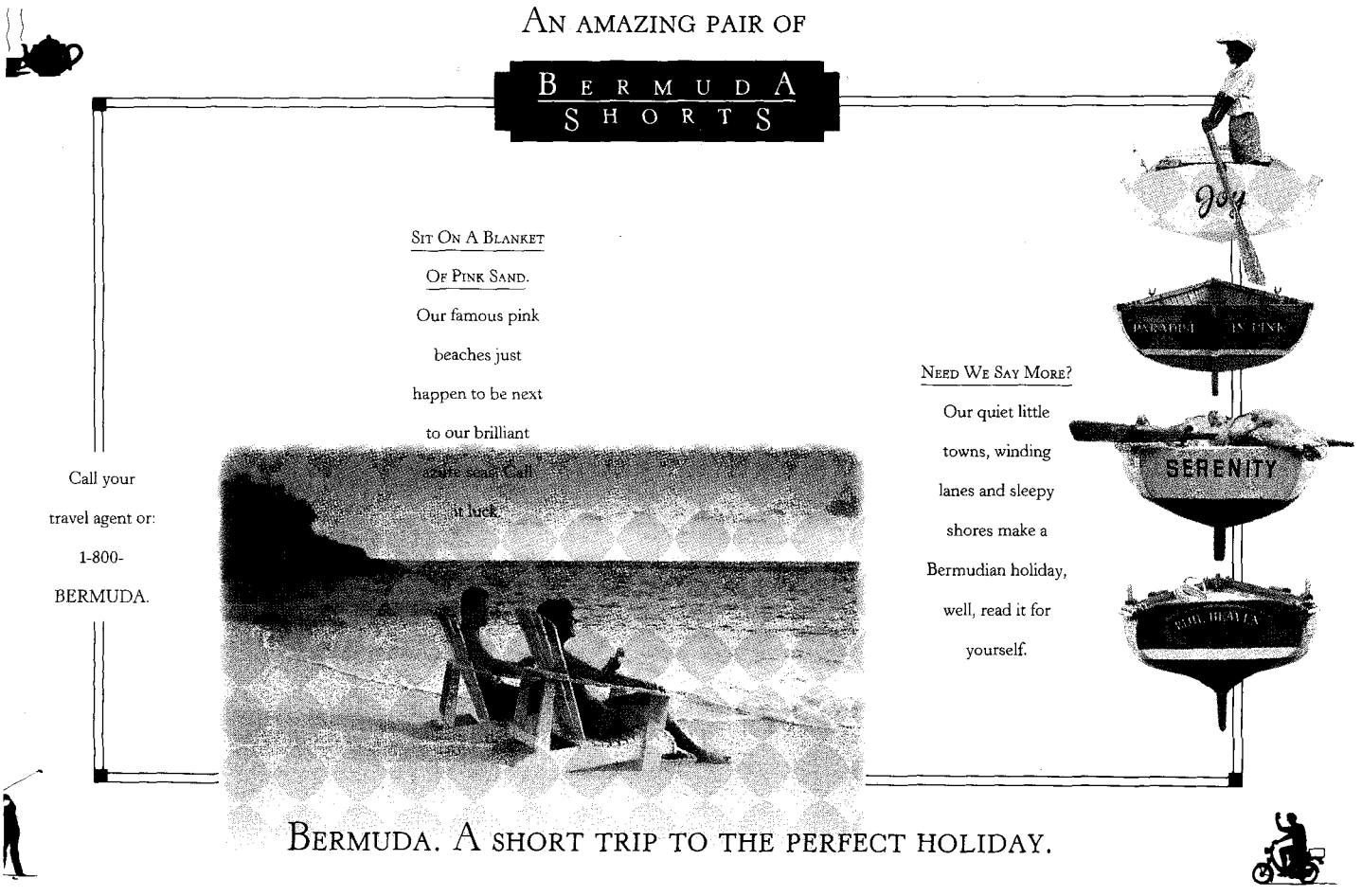
Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar in the heart of N.Y.U. country. It's advisable to get all your talking done between sets, because once the first chord is struck the audience here—with a little help from the management—becomes as quiet as a church congregation. The piano-and-bass duo of **Kirk Lightsey** and **Don Pate** performs through July 13, and the trio of pianist **Kenny Barron,** bassist **Paul West,** and drummer **Ben Riley** starts up on July 15. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Bell-bottoms and peace signs aren't the only nostalgia craze in town: at the Cat Club on Sunday nights, the nineteen-thirties are in vogue. On other nights of the week, the club attracts a scruffy leather-and-lace crowd, but Sundays belong to the Swing Dance Society, whose passion is the Lindy Hop, a dance named after Charles Lindbergh. The dancers are young and old, graceful and flat-footed; the drink of choice is the Swing Dance Punch; the staff looks alternately bemused and bewildered by the genteel crowd. The **Jorge Anders** big band is in charge on July 14. Music from eight to midnight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—In the late seventies and early eighties, this dark cave (graffitied walls, a battered pool table, rest rooms for the intrepid only) was the hub of a thriving punk-music scene—Blondie, Talking Heads, the Ramones, and Television were regular attractions. Other clubs of the era have fizzled, but CB's perseveres, and young hopefuls continue to fill the stage nightly. Music from eight Sundays and Mondays, from eight-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty Fridays through Saturdays.

Condon's, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—Jazz clubs aren't always known for their romantic atmosphere, but Condon's earns higher marks than most. It's a basement establishment, with lemon walls and abundant candlelight. They rearranged the furniture here a while back, so that now a greater number of people look at the stage rather than at a pole. Pianist **Roland Hanna** leads a quartet beginning on July 16. Music after nine.

Cornelia Street Café, 29 Cornelia St. (989-9319)—In the basement of this tucked-away



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NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

Village restaurant-bar is a narrow, white-brick-walled room, decorated with a few tables and steampipes, where you'll find music, poetry readings, and theatre-of-the-cramped. The restaurant itself is a wine-and-candlelight neighborhood café; downstairs, there's a do-it-yourself, sixties-coffeehouse aesthetic at work. Music begins at nine.

DIVA, 306 E. 81st St. (650-1928)—A newly hatched restaurant and piano bar. It's a modest-sized, brick-walled room that offers Italian fare and the musings of pianists, including **CHARLES DE FOREST** every Tuesday through Saturday. Music from eight-thirty. Closed Sundays.

EAGLE TAVERN, 355 W. 14th St. (924-0275)—An Irish pub in the meat-packing district, not too far from the boondocks. In the front room, barbirds study the TV and growl about one thing or another, and in the back room another crowd listens to Irish folk musicians (on Fridays) and acoustic guitarists (on Saturdays). One of the former—button accordion virtuoso James Keane—performs on July 12, at nine and ten-thirty.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—The seating arrangement in this long, narrow, red-velvet-and-mirror-walled basement makes flying coach seem roomy; nevertheless, it's one of the city's top jazz spots—thanks largely to the club's talent bookers. But watch your head. Tenor sax player **FRANK MORGAN** leads a quartet here July 9-14. The **BENNY GOLSON** quartet sets to work on July 16. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

FORTUNE GARDEN PAVILION, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—With jazz you get eggroll. At this posh-looking two-floor Chinese restaurant, tucked into a midtown skyscraper, you'll find a lot of businesspeople and a lot of hanging plants. In the middle of the main dining room, you'll also find a Steinway grand, with musicians grouped around it. Beginning on July 16 clarinettist Ron Odrich (who doubles as a dentist) leads a foursome. Music from six-thirty.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—An Old New York kind of place, with dark-wood panelling, white tablecloths, and brass-figurine lamps. **CAREN COLE** performs on July 7; stride pianist **JUDY CARMICHAEL**—a regular here—and her able companion, the saxophonist **MIKE HASHIM,** appear July 10-13; and **LEE ANN LEDGERWOOD** and **STEVE LA SPINA** start work on July 17. Music from nine-forty-five.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Situated in a neighborhood that boasts the Puck Building to the west and a host of windshield washers to the east, this modest space provides a forum for free-thinking musicians. Beat and melody are optional, "music" and "noise" relative terms. **BOB MOULD,** who'll play a solo acoustic set here on July 10, has released two solo albums since the demise of his thrash outfit Hüsker Dü: "Workbook," which was surprisingly quiet and lyrical, and "Black Sheets of Rain," which was, in Mould's own words, "pretty unholy loud." Music after nine.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—Spiffed-up theatre patrons walk by this club's façade—a Silver Eagle bus, with tires you can kick—and scratch their heads. Inside, big, bearded guys with cowboy hats rub elbows at the bar while newcomers study the Texan memorabilia and, upstairs, the display of vintage Gibson guitars. The dining room, where bands hold sway, features a Wright Brothers-era airplane suspended from the ceiling, a dance floor where you can stir up some dust, and a balcony, for quiet types. Upcoming highlights: Larry McCray and Young Neal & the Vipers on July 11; **BEN VAUGHN** and Bop Harvey on July 12. Music after nine. Dining.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—A bright spot on the little-heralded Upper East Side club scene. Don't go expecting to be sprayed with soapy water and massaged by large brushes: the fluorescent sign outside is the only car-wash reference. Inside, the place looks like an adman's idea of a blues bar. Sets from nine-fifteen, except on Sundays, when shows begin at eight.

MARQUEE, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—The current front-runner on the alternative-music scene. The **LA'S,** who perform here on July 10, came up in Liverpool, and, judging from their self-titled début album, they have studied well at the feet of that city's most famous sons. They show traces of the early Fab Four's transcendent pop charm, not to mention echoes of the Kinks, the Who, and the Animals. The band walks a fine line between originality and meticulous revivalism, but if they are derivative at least they grave-rob with style: they manage to shape something fresh from a catalogue of sixties-pop conventions. Other highlights: the British neo-punk outfit **BIRDLAND** on July 14; the **MEAT PUPPETS, FLAT DUO JETS,** and the Jayhawks on July 15; Ned's Atomic Dustbin, Doughboys, and others on July 17.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—A small-pond club for big-fish bands. There's not much here to look at: it's a back-room affair with a dingy stage and a baby grand someone apparently tried to cover with papier-mâché. Still, the bookers know their college-radio playlists. The **MEKONS,** first-wave punkers, appear on July 8; the **LEAVING TRAINS** and the Hickoids come in on July 11. Shows at ten on Thursdays, and at eleven on Fridays and Saturdays.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A midtown restaurant and jazz lair for the tasselled-loafers set. The dark, sombre bar (carved-wood lions, iron grillwork) looks like a place you'd find in London's financial district; the dining room—putting-green carpet, lime-green leather banquettes, panelled ceiling—has more of a country-club feel. Pianist **TERRY WALDO** is currently leading an ensemble in a show tantalizingly titled "Sporting House Revelries: An Authentic Look at the Bordello Music of New Orleans." Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000) —A great, pricey cabaret in the sky. Singer **PHYLLIS NEWMAN** commences an engagement on July 9. Shows at nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. When the band is swinging, and you and your dreamboat are cheek to cheek, everything can seem just swell. Mondays and Tuesdays are the property of **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** a band that relies on period instruments, old-fashioned felt-bannered music stands, and original-score arrangements to re-create the look and sound of a thirties swing outfit. Fridays belong to Sam Ulano and his Dixielanders, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and his Stompers. On July 10, you can hear the Bill and George Simon group as well as the George Gee orchestra. Stan Rubin's big band plays on July 11. Show times vary.

RITZ, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—**RICHARD THOMPSON** and **SHAWN COLVIN** will be here on July 9; the **DICKIES, LUNACHICKS,** and the **RADICTS** come in on July 13; and a slew of bands, including the dance-pop group **EMF** and rappers **DE LA SOUL,** share the bill on July 15. De La Soul, whose blithe, hippieish, free-to-be-you-and-me début album "3 Feet High & Rising" caused a landslide of critical and popular acclaim, have stared their own hype straight in the face and released a more cynical follow-up titled "De La Soul Is Dead." Shows usually begin at eight Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

RODEO BAR, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—A Western theme bar, attached to a Mexican restaurant. You get walls designed to simulate a log cabin; a buffalo head that blows smoke through its nostrils; a horse trailer that's been converted into a bar; peanuts for eating and, occasionally, throwing. But wait, there's more: a TV that plays tapes of rodeos; New Mexico memorabilia; and live music nightly—country, blues, folk, rock, hillbilly. Shows from ten-thirty.

RUSSIAN TEA ROOM, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947) —For the next couple of weeks, the Tea Room will be doing a little world travelling on Tuesday nights. On July 16, **ANN HAMPTON CALLAWAY** will head up an evening of Russian music and food, with the food being served at seven and the music at nine.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A big, cheerful room, painted a light tropical blue, where you can pick 'em up and set 'em down to sounds from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. Ample seating for the contemplative. **CHEB KHALED** performs on July 10, and **MORY KANTÉ** on July 11. Closed Sundays. Dining.

STICKY MIKE'S FROG BAR, 8 Great Jones St. (533-3000)—This subterranean jazz haunt—located on a chunk of real estate that's temporarily safe from the encroachment of Tower industries—is a newcomer to New York's night life. On the club's back wall one finds embarrassingly cheesy renderings of full-figured gals—the kind of artwork usually reserved for pinball machines. Otherwise, it's an airy, convivial place, with some comfy, diner-style booths, a fleet of IKEA-style tables and chairs, and jazz musicians on the bandstand every Friday and Saturday, beginning at ten.

De La Soul, at the Ritz

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. The **ART FARMER** quintet, featuring the versatile woodwind soloist **JIMMY HEATH,** is currently in residence. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter Miles Evans is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Located on a Chelsea block that has become an urban Disneyland (a pool hall, an indoor miniature-golf course, a trendy all-night diner, Limelight around the corner), this roller-rink-size bar-and-restaurant is a little slicker and a lot roomier than the original Tramps, but the emphasis on solid rock and blues remains. On July 15, R.E.M. singer **MICHAEL STIPE** will host an evening called "Deep South in New N.Y.C." The program will consist of four unsigned bands whose demo tapes Stipe recently produced—**BEGGAR WEEDS,** from Jacksonville, Florida; and **DAISY, SWELL DOPA,** and **OPAL FOXX QUARTET,** all from Georgia. Beggar Weeds, whose sets sometimes open with a jingle about orange juice and who have been seen engaged in a clunky dance maneuver known as the "Jacksonville Stomp," play a fun, slightly scrappy guitar pop that's part country, part garage rock, and part sixties-style abandon, à la "I Wanna Be Your Man" by the Beatles.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." The **DEWEY REDMAN** quintet performs here starting on July 9, and the **RALPH MOORE** quintet begins work on July 16. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays. Music after nine-thirty.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—One of those snazzy, awninged eateries you've seen nestled amid brownstones in the Village and always wondered about. Pianist **JUNIOR MANCE** and bassist **MARTY RIVERA** work out through July 13. Pianist **JANE JARVIS** and bassist **FRANK TATE** get under way on July 15. Music from eight. Closed Sundays.

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EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

TO the people walking out of the restaurant Coco Pazzo onto lovely, tree-lined East 74th Street, between Fifth and Madison, it was a sultry summer night. How could they know that there was a 1990 Acura Legend missing from the block? It had been there ten minutes before, parked on the north side. The exiting diners may have spotted the car's troubled owner in their path, though he wasn't wailing. Even if they had known enough to respond to this stricken person, what could they have done? He wasn't hurt physically. The only thing that looked wrong was that he was all dressed up with no way to go.

Nevertheless, there was one hot spot where his appearance was required. Luckily, the Nineteenth Precinct is easy enough to get into, with lighting as distinctive as that at the new restaurant/club Le Bar Bat, and regulars with a unique set of come-on lines. "What kind of car did you have?" the male and female police officers asked the troubled soul, in unison. "An Acura Legend," he replied. "Good hit!" the two replied. They'd obviously had a lot of practice at this, but they were amateurs next to the woman who took down the missing-auto report. She knew her role so well that she didn't even have to listen to the complainant. She had Maxi Priest blaring out of a boom box that was so loud that people going to bed in Negril were pestering international operators to get her to turn it down. "This bothering you?" she asked with feigned annoyance. No, the soul replied, it's just that he couldn't hear a single question she was asking. "Well, I hear *you* fine," she replied. "Here, fill this out outside and I'll type it later." But when later arrived, she said she couldn't read the soul's writing, so he screamed out all his particulars while trying to avoid the rhythm pattern of Mr. Priest.

A few nights later, the guy got a call from a police officer in the South Bronx. The cop had stopped a young man who was driving an Acura and who didn't look as if he were in the habit of making monthly payments. "Bonfire" country or not, the aggrieved party said he'd be right over, but the officer said, "No, we're transferring the car to the pound in Whitestone. This isn't like your neighborhood. You don't want to come here." The guy looked out his window onto civilized 74th Street, between Fifth and Madison, and jumped, very quietly, for joy.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Serious Fun!—July 11 at 7:30 and July 12-13 at 8: "The Mysteries and What's So Funny?," an evening-length work written and directed by David Gordon, with design by Red Grooms and music by Philip Glass. . . . ¶ July 16 at 8: Dancenoise, the performance duo, in "It's a Girl"; and "B-4-Sin," by Johanna Went. . . . ¶ July 17 at 8: Frank Olivier, a juggler; Keith Terry, a dancer and percussionist; and Leonard Pitt, a solo performer. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Through Aug. 3.)

Deb Margolin—In a reprise of "970-DEBB," in which the performance artist promises to dance around like Madonna. (Interart Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St. 246-1050. July 11, July 13, and July 17 at 8. Through July 28.)

ART

THE current show at the Borden gallery (560 Broadway; closed Mondays, through July 12) originated as a project for a book, one just published by the Whitney Museum Library Fellows. Titled "Swimming," the book consists of color photographs by Tina Barney—that neo-Jamesian chronicler of upper-crust family living on the Northeastern Coast—coupled with a short play by Tina Howe, the author of "Painting Churches" and other impressively genteel works for the theatre. Though it is set at the beach, and though it culminates in the old-school-team cry "Go, Ollie!," Howe's playlet is basically about the queasy effects on a pair of teen-agers—and on a friend of theirs and on their mother—of divorce and the evidently happy remarriage of the teen-agers' father. Howe's dialogue is very true to life, and revolves around the rue-dripping irony that one person's good news—an attractive and non-wicked new stepmother, for instance—can drive a stake through another perfectly intelligent, civilized, attractive woman's vain and battered heart. The play's whole mission is to induce little wizened smiles of idealized recognition. It's *la condition humaine,* for all us patrons of Ralph Lauren.

Barney is the edgier and more perverse Tina. As genre tableaux, her set-up scenes are formally inventive—like snapshots taken through the lens of a baroque academician's camera—and often mysteriously acid, but never dark. The pictures are about the odd, unconscious chemicals at work in relationships. Whether the subjects are emerging from lakes, spreading peanut butter, or pouring drinks, the photos are telling, and they seem both familiar and exotic whether you think you recognize these types or not. The photographs in "Swimming" are off-beat and whimsical, though not as tough as Barney's work usually is. (She has even gone so far as to include a wry self-portrait, in which she's wearing heavy rain gear and standing in a puddle.) Barney is a true intimist, the sort who is probably never one hundred per cent at ease with any "outside" commission.

For those who would like to further pursue a swimming theme in art viewing this week, we recommend a show of oil paintings by Grégoire Müller (at McCoy, 41 East 57th Street; also through July 12). Müller is Swiss, yet most of the swimmers in these scraped-down works on raw jute canvases seem Oriental: symbolist people. They are also poignant, solitary, and effortful, like doggies at sea.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A hundred and fifty sculptures, drawings, and decorative objects by Paul Manship (1885-1966). Through Sept. 1. . . . ¶ "The Sculpture of Indonesia," which includes much material on display outside its native land for the first time, exposes us to the fascinating, if only partially knowable, world of Hindu and Buddhist sculpture. The show begins with a few magnificent Bronze Age works—such as a massive ceremonial tablet and axe with fanciful shapes and crisp geometric details in shallow relief—that are included just to indicate that ceremonial object-making did not begin with the arrival of the Indian deities. Many of these prehistoric pieces bear a strong resemblance to similarly dated ones from China and what is now Vietnam; it is virtually impossible to distinguish a number of the Hindu and Buddhist works here from their Indian antecedents. But when an Indonesian sculptural identity emerges, it is hard to surpass. A stone sculpture of Prajnaparamita, the goddess of transcendental wisdom, is considered perhaps Indonesia's most important sculpture, and it is indeed the embodiment of grace. It was carved around 1300, in East Java, at the same time and in the same place as a very different statue of Bhairava, a fierce and demonic four-armed deity who wears a necklace of small severed heads, sits on a jackal, and rests his feet on a mound of human skulls. There are many other contrasts in the exhibition, and numerous sculptural wonders, including one of the five hundred and four seated Buddhas from Borobudur, the largest Buddhist temple in the world. Through Aug. 18. . . . ¶ If you need a break from the blockbusters, or the line for the restaurant is too long, you might wander through the Islamic galleries to "The Perfect Page," a small, glorious display of a few dozen illuminated manuscripts from the museum's extensive collection of Persian, Ottoman, and Indian works from the fourteenth century through the nineteenth. As one might expect, there are remarkably detailed volumes of the Koran, with their fanciful Arabic script, and there is also an amazing Ottoman calendar in the form of a scroll, which indicates not simply the date but also the aspects of the sun, the phases of the moon, and the times of prayer in the various seasons. Also included is an exquisite sultan's cipher, similar to the one included in the museum's recent Süleyman the Magnificent extravaganza; this piece must be history's first decorative whiplash shape, anticipating the very modern Art Nouveau lines that followed much later. Through Aug. 18. . . . ¶ Walter Annenberg, who made a name for himself as the publisher of *TV Guide,* turned down a billion-dollar offer for his modern-art collection and chose instead the nobler path of philanthropy by bequeathing it to this museum several months ago. The gift of the collection, which had been perhaps the finest grouping of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings still in private hands, sets a standard of excellence for future patrons of the arts. The show begins with some exquisite small works by Fantin-Latour, followed by two rooms, devoted to Monet, van Gogh, Gauguin, and Cézanne, that would be the pride of any museum. These rooms include some of the collection's finest works, such as Monet's "Poppy Field, Argenteuil" (1875), Gauguin's "The Siesta" (1892-94), and Cézanne's "The House with the Cracked Walls" (1892-94), all of which were purchased by Annenberg in 1983 from his sister Enid Haupt. Farther on are some very good early-twentieth-century works, including Picasso's haunting "At the Lapin Agile" (1905), an important but somewhat overwrought Vuillard, a beautiful Matisse, and a very pretty Bonnard; these works, however, are not up to the same level as the great Impressionist ones. . . . **NOTE:** The museum's roof garden, planted with nine sculptures by Rodin, is open when the weather permits. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—Ninety-five paintings, collages, and gouaches by Ad Reinhardt (1913-67). Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "Seven Master Printmakers: Innovations in the Eighties." Through Aug. 13. . . . ¶ A small but pleasurably edifying show of drawings and models by the landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx. A Brazilian who works mainly in his own country, Burle Marx is an uncompromisingly modern gardener who sculpts and paints with nature in broad, mid-century rhythms and bold strokes. If his emphasis on rubber plants sometimes harks back to all those progressive corporate lobbies of the fifties, his most panoramic vistas still have the big, beautiful look of Tomorrow. Through Aug. 13. . . . ¶ A video installation by Thierry Kuntzel is the latest work in the "Projects" series. Through Sept. 2. . . . **NOTE:** The museum's sculpture garden, at 14 W. 54th St., is open, free, on Fridays and Satur-

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ART–Cont'd

days from 6 to 10, with musicians from the Juilliard School performing at 7:30. This summer's program is dedicated to the music of Erik Satie. (The museum is open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until early 1992.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"American Life in American Art," a show of approximately a hundred and seventy twentieth-century paintings and sculptures from the museum's permanent collection. . . . ¶ Forty-five sculptures, drawings, and various objects made by Hunt Diederich (1884-1953). Through Sept. 29. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Tina Barney and Tina Howe

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Chris Burden's installation "Medusa's Head" is a five-ton hanging sphere composed of stone and toy trains. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "Quattrocento: Early Italian Panel Paintings." . . . ¶ Forty works of art from Oceania (mostly from the Sepik and Ramu river basins in New Guinea), including three-inch-long fishhooks, three monumental carved-wood "guardians," and a skull rack made of palm, raffia, and bamboo. Through Sept. 16. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—"The Story of a Painting: A Korean Buddhist Treasure from the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation." This scholar's dream show takes a single work of art and casts about in several different historical directions at once. The painting under examination, known as the Burke Triad, depicts the Buddha and two attendant bodhisattvas, and is a rare example of pre-invasion Buddhist art. The show also provides a mini-history of the triad form, a view of Korean Buddhist monastic life, and a sampling of later Korean painting, much of which has a marvellous flattened, Netherlandish space. It's a tightly packed display, fascinating and at times confusing. On the whole it offers a somewhat loopy view, mostly due to the breadth of the subjects and the smallness of the exhibition. Nevertheless, there are several rich works to savor. Through July 28. . . . ¶ "The Here and the Hereafter: Images of Paradise in Islamic Art." Through Sept. 8. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—"The Nearest Edge of the World," an exhibition of works in several mediums by nine contemporary artists from Cuba. Through Aug. 4. (Open weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)

Jewish Museum, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Painting a Place in America: Jewish Artists in New York, 1900-45." Jewish painters and sculptors have certainly made contributions to the history of twentieth-century American art, but this is a silly idea for an exhibition, and no great historical insight is gained by the segregation. The organizers attempt to give purpose to their presentation by structuring the material around several educational and trade groups that fostered Jewish learning and identity. What the viewer is left with, however, is primarily an impression of second-rate, labored art—the essentially boring heaviness of urban social realism, as typified by the Soyer brothers and provincial abstraction. But there are some delightful discoveries in the show—works by artists who would likely be overlooked by other art histories. They include a Cubistic 1915 portrait of Marsden Hartley, both witty and gripping, by Ben Benn, and a mythical, Old World circus scene by Benjamin Kopman, with shades of Chagall, Ensor, and Marc. The issue of Jewish identity in modern American art gets interesting at the point where the exhibitions ends, with the work of Newman, Rothko, and Gottlieb. The influence of Jewish mysticism on this trio's new art of spirituality is barely given a nod. Through Sept. 29. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 3.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Mozart: Prodigy of Nature." A comprehensive exhibition of all things Mozart. The show includes more than fifty manuscripts, from four pieces composed at age five to a first draft of the Requiem; early letters home from Italy (December, 1769) and his last letter to his father (April, 1787); and his "Verzeichnüss aller meiner Werke" ("Catalogue of All My Works"), which he kept for the last seven years of his life. Through Aug. 4. . . . ¶ Eighteenth-century drawings, from the library's collection, by the Venetian masters Tiepolo, Guardi, and Canaletto. Through Aug. 4. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Ave., at 104th St.—The "Nuyorican" experience is alive in the work of Pepón Osorio, who moved to New York from Puerto Rico in 1975. At the entrance to this retrospective of his work is a fancy, fake-Venetian chandelier further ornamented by a trove of tacky tchotchkes, ranging from dominoes and water pistols to plastic ferns and tiny, brittle street-stand dolls. Other lightly nostalgic and comic charmers—some the results of performance collaborations with Merián Soto, the artist's choreographer wife—include "La Cama," a room-size work, with bed and coverlet, dedicated to the artist's nanny, and "Broken Hearts," a set piece, featuring luggage, about the dashed dreams of immigrants from the south. "The Wake," a life-size replica of a funeral parlor full of coffins and body bags, is a harrowing depiction of AIDS, both solemn and almost grotesquely disorienting in a museum setting. Through Aug. 4. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"Paint, Powder, and Leaf" showcases nearly a hundred decorated objects, from tin coffeepots and cannisters to wood chests and iron fire screens. Through Sept. 15. . . . ¶ A show of twenty-four quilts with floral themes, all prize-winners from this spring's Great American Quilt Festival. Through Sept. 15. . . . ¶ Forty-five narrative paintings by Harry Lieberman (1880-1983). Through Sept. 22. (Open daily, 9 to 9.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—"Africa Explores: Twentieth-Century African Art" presents more than a hundred art works in various mediums. The works are divided into five categories: "Traditional," "New Functional," "Urban," "International," and "Extinct." The Center for African Art has organized the exhibition, which runs simultaneously in its galleries, at 54 E. 68th St. (Open daily, except Mondays; opens Sundays at noon.) Through Aug. 18. . . . ¶ In a show called "Embodying Faith," five contemporary artists tackle the theme of the relationship between the physical and the spiritual in Christianity. Through Aug. 18. . . . ¶ In the museum's Broadway windows is an installation by the Catalan artist Perejaume, titled "Pintura i Representació," that consists of two rows of visitor-accessible theatre seats. Through Aug. 18. . . . ¶ "Eclipse of the Earth," an installation by Kazuo Katase. Through Aug. 18. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"The Taste of Andrew Carnegie." The Scottish-born steel industrialist seemed to understand the difference between taste and historical judgment. His taste tended toward brooding Victoriana—sentimental peasant scenes and uninspiringly picturesque landscapes—but when it came to his legacy he trusted the experts and displayed a faith in public institutions that was unparalleled. By the time he died, in 1919, he had given away ninety per cent of his fortune to fund universities, concert halls (including New York's Carnegie), Pittsburgh's Carnegie Institute, and more than twenty-five hundred libraries. This small show includes some of Carnegie's mediocre personal collection as well as selections from a fine print collection, including examples by Dürer and Goltzius, from the Carnegie Institute. The most enjoyable part of the show is the memorabilia, such as a menu from a dinner in Carnegie's honor that describes the "Bieffe" course as "Wut's Good's all Scotch, all that isn't ain't." Through Aug. 4. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Kingdoms of Land, Sea, and Sky" includes a hundred and eighty zoological woodcuts, engravings, and watercolors by artists and naturalists such as Albrecht Dürer, John James Audubon, Edward Lear, and Maria Sibylla Merian. Through Aug. 24. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.) . . . ¶ A display of recently acquired rare books and manuscripts, including Joseph Conrad's manuscript for "The Secret Sharer" and Washington Irving's manuscript for "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." (Berg Collection. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—A retrospective of works by Romare Bearden (1912-88), which includes a hundred and forty-one oils, collages, and watercolors. Through Aug. 11. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

"Portraits on Paper"—This selection of forty works in several mediums is an interesting counterpoint to the portrait show that Chuck Close, who is represented here, recently assembled at the Museum of Modern Art. Unlike Close's show, in which the portraits were racked and stacked on every available surface, this one gives ample space to each one. A tilt of the head, a reticent eye, a pair of pouting lips—these are the revealing details, as seen in such works as a Samaras pastel, a Clemente watercolor, and an early Warhol photo-booth self-portrait. There are some provocative juxtapositions. At the entrance to the show is a Gilbert and George photo work of a taxi-driver flanked by the voyeuristic, somewhat predatory portrayers, who are positioned as if they were patron saints in a Flemish altarpiece; opposite this, in a neat act of symmetry, are photographic portraits of the British duo by the New York duo McDermott and McGough. Elsewhere, there is a fascinating study in frontality in the unlikely linking of Basquiat, Dubuffet, and Condo. Robert Mapplethorpe's photograph of Roy Cohn's shiny, scarred face against a black ground looks like a depiction of the Devil himself. Even more haunting is a Cindy Sherman self-portrait, taken in 1975, when the artist was a college junior: it shows her as a little girl who might well have stepped out of a Walker Evans photograph. This is social realism kissed by a subtle sarcasm, and as such it prefigures the tone much of her generation went on to convey. Through Aug. 2. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

"Broadway! 125 Years of Musical Theatre"—A large assortment of objects—including paintings, posters, scripts, models, sheet music, and memorabilia—from more than seventy-five productions that have bowed on the Great White Way. Among the highlights is a silver tray that was presented to George Gershwin, engraved with the signatures of a hundred and forty-three theatre luminaries. Through July 13. (I.B.M. Gallery of Science and Art, Madison Ave. at 56th St. Closed Mondays, open Saturdays.)

Short List—Grégoire Müller, McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (closed Mondays, through July 12); **Bernarda Bryson Shahn,** Midtown-Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through July 26).

GALLERIES—SoHo

Timur Novikov—Unlike much of the Soviet art that has reached New York, Novikov's narrative paintings are the product of a light touch. All the works in this show consist of

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RECEPTACLES

James Garvey, a blacksmith, has watched too many scraps of garbage blow out of drab, lidless garbage cans and past his studio at 153 Franklin Street. His response: the Triangle Trash Basket, a trash repository that combines delicate good looks with a firm lid. Last week, he installed baskets at the four corners of Hudson and Franklin Streets, where the Sanitation Department is allowing them a six-month trial run. The sides of the baskets are made of a handwoven wire mesh that has a releasing action when the vessels are upended. The baskets hang on frames that look like scribbles forged from one-and-a-half-inch solid-steel bars and that Garvey says are "as strong as fire hydrants." The filigree lids bear Ss joined back-to-back to form hearts.

Garvey is now seeking city approval for other forms of pedestrian-stopping street décor: tall, pyramidal bike racks whose bike hooks dangle from long chains and bring to mind instruments of torture; pedestrian street-crossing viaducts with triangular steps; and lampposts topped by light fixtures shaped like Stealth bombers and made of carbon-fibre composite. "I want to put inspiration into routine treks, and refresh people caught up in mundane thoughts," Garvey says.

two contrasting pieces of fabric sewn together along horizon lines of various sorts; small painted elements added to the fabric set the narratives in motion. Through July 31. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

Richard Tobias—Paintings from 1983 to the present. This very subtle artist brings a strange, febrile lyricism to otherwise cool, precise, geometric compositions, thereby striking a balance of mood and temperature that sometimes recalls late Kandinsky. Tobias's most recent abstractions include buoyant, biomorphic shapes against gridded white grounds; these works suggest a reticent temperament flowering into boldness. They are crisp, funny, and warm-to-hot. Through July 12. (Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

Gilberto Zorio—This Arte Povera artist is half mystic, half trickster. In the main gallery is a kayak-shaped piece with long copper rods and a bulbous flask filled with a copper-sulfide composition. The work is suspended from metal supports that aggressively stab the walls like javelins; it delineates its space with the theatrical grace of baroque architecture. There are also two metal star shapes, with similar supports. At regular intervals, a timer goes off and the sculptures start shaking, and loud scraping, whistling sounds pierce the space with the urgency of a Richard Foreman production. Upstairs, there are several fine drawings and a beautifully attenuated Dionysian bong. Its flask is filled with vodka, which a tall person could drink by sucking on the suspended end of a copper tube. Through July 27. (SteinGladstone, 99 Wooster St.)

"The Third Rail"—Urban anxiety has been a recurring theme recently, and this group show attempts to reveal what the new Harings and Holzers are up to. The works here are made of such functional urban materials as nightsticks, apartment-door peepholes, metal escape hatches, and a bullet-proof ticket window. The show includes a lot of work well installed in a small space, but, despite noble intentions, most of it lacks depth and, curiously, bite. Through July 12. (Lee, 588 Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

Group Shows—At **Gorney**, 100 Greene St.: This exhibition takes a familiar theme—the loss of the original—and presents it afresh with various kinds of art. The London-based artist Michael Landy has literally brought the marketplace into the gallery and presented it as a relic: his two antique stall carts, spiffed up with a fresh paint job, are the show's most physically dominant works. Nearby are two elegiac paintings by Peter Nagy—in his distinctive, computer-esque black-and-white—of himself lurking in the shadows of the ruined cities of Persepolis and Narlanda. The works are surprisingly personal given the impersonal technique, and are among his best to date. Christian Marclay, who has been shown too often lately, is represented by some good work—album covers with abstract images, mostly from the fifties and sixties, which the artist has painted over to make abstract paintings. Steve Wolfe's exquisitely detailed trompe-l'oeil books, which are made of painted wood and which include a necessarily unreadable sculpture of Baudelaire's "Flowers of Evil," are good group-show fare, while Andreas Schön's realistic but also exceedingly abstract painting of a field is a teaser begging for a solo show. Through July 26. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **Sonnabend**, 420 West Broadway: Recent works by three very different artists from this gallery. Ashley Bickerton is trying very hard, but his new piece—an incense-burning shrine dealing with labor, immigration, and survival—doesn't work. Terry Winters' new paintings on paper of skeletal body parts seem deliberately less sensual than usual, and somewhat more interesting. Gilberto Zorio is represented by two eccentrically visionary sculptures of the sort he currently has on view at SteinGladstone. Through July 26. (Closed Mondays.)

Short List—**Gary Brotmeyer**, Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (closed Mondays, through July 31); **Jaime Davidovich**, Exit Art, 578 Broadway (closed Mondays, open Saturdays, through July 13); **David Weinrib**, Steinbaum, 132 Greene St. (closed Mondays, open Saturdays, through July 20).

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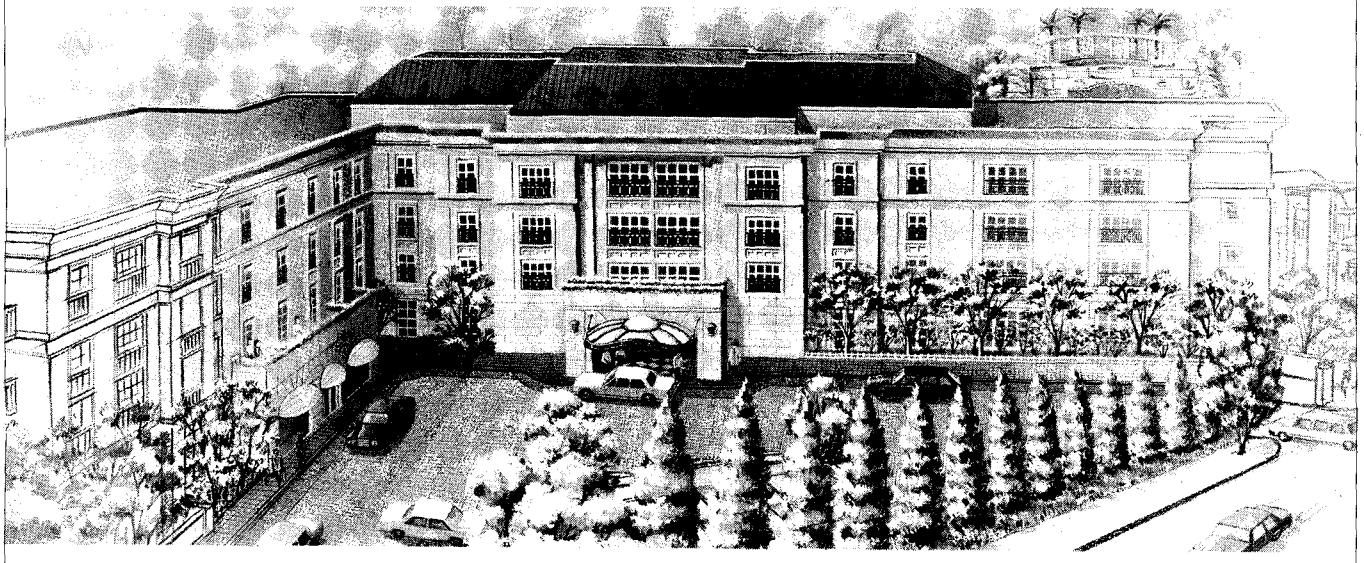

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

PHOTOGRAPHY

"THE ITALIAN GARDEN" sounds like a coffee-table book we've seen before. It isn't. This modestly sized volume (published this spring by Harry N. Abrams) consists of especially fine photographs by Geoffrey James, who has been working on the subject for a decade, and who approaches it in a distinctive way. James uses a nineteen-twenties Kodak Panoramic camera, which gives the images a width and a sense of depth that make viewers feel as if they were standing in these gardens. The photographs are black-and-white; they have none of the splash and obvious prettiness that color photographs can bring to this topic. Instead, there's a sense of time, culture, and memory. James has managed to avoid the usual picturesques; he doesn't go for the moody point about things being in ruins. Rather, he portrays the complexity of the beauty one finds in these gardens—the use of perspective, the interaction with architecture, the responsiveness to changes of light, and the idealistic sense of order, as well as the acceptance of that which cannot be controlled.

As it happens, last month we were visiting one of the places that James has photographed—the Isola Bella, on Lake Maggiore. In James's pictures you don't see the peacocks that show off there, or the thousands of people one usually encounters. He makes you feel as if you were the only one there. The places feel quiet, all yours to discover and experience. (The book also offers an essay by Robert Harbison and an afterword by James.)

HENRY P. BOSSE (1844-1903) / ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ (1894-1985)—A group of oval cyanotypes taken on the upper Mississippi River, between Minneapolis and St. Louis, that document both the river's life and its surroundings. There are raftboats, tugboats, towboats, and steam launches; so many elements in these photographs are of interest—the changing horizons, the shapes of the river, the engineering of the bridges and wing dams—that once you start looking it's hard to stop. / A small group of photographs on *cartes postales* made by Kertész during his eleven-year stay in Paris (1925-36). Both shows through July 31. (Lowinsky, 584 Broadway.)

BRIAN WEIL / PAUL ICKOVIC—A show of photographs the artist has made in response to the AIDS epidemic. Weil is not only serious and well intentioned but also highly conscious of the complexities of his subject and its representation. His work is particularly revealing because he takes portraits of individuals, not of a "disease"; he may show us ways in which AIDS affects people's lives, but he isn't satisfied with producing mere visual or social clichés. / "Safe Conduct," a show of black-and-white photographs documenting the recent political and social upheaval in Czechoslovakia. Both shows through July 21. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

GROUP SHOW—A diverse and absorbing group of pictures compiled with children in mind. There are terrific Weegees; several Lartigues, charming as always; a hysterical Doisneau on the theme of boredom in school; and many other works of well-known photographers. Through July 31. (Danziger, 415 West Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

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MUSIC

OF all the nearby summer music festivals, we have long enjoyed Caramoor most: not because the repertoire is especially challenging or unusual (though occasionally it is), nor because the grounds are lovely and the performing spaces intimate (though they are), but because the musicians who make up the Orchestra of St. Luke's are—at their best—so lively, expert, unjaded, and musical. They provide most of the music at Caramoor, and we have heard them repeatedly with pleasure. We especially like the idea of the conductorless Bach program, set for July 12: the first "Brandenburg"; the B-Minor Orchestral Suite, with Elizabeth Mann as flute soloist; a harpsichord concerto, with Robert Wolinsky; and the fifty-sixth church cantata, "Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen," with the warm-voiced and expressive baritone William Sharp. The St. Luke's band has become much more celebrated, visible, busy, ambitious, and commercial than it was when we started hearing it, about a decade ago, but its core group of instrumentalists has retained a chamber-ensemble vitality that makes all the difference. We especially like them in Baroque music: they're light and athletic, straightforward, and more in the tradition of Busch and Serkin than in that of the early-music movement. And they always, or nearly always, give the impression of excited engagement with each successive gesture.

IN TOWN—OPERA

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—The opening performances of the season, which runs through Nov. 17. A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC, by Stephen Sondheim, with Sally Ann Howes, Elaine Bonazzi, Beverly Lambert, George Lee Andrews, and Kevin Anderson; conducted by Paul Gemignani. (July 9 and July 13 at 8.) . . . TOSCA, with Martha Thigpen, Antonio Barasorda, and Harry Dworchak; Steven Sloane. (July 11 at 8 and July 14 at 2.) . . . TURANDOT, with Ealynn Voss, Edith Davis, Thomas Booth, and Wilbur Pauley; Guido Ajmone-Marsan. (July 12 and July 17 at 8.) . . . LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES, with Joan Gibbons, Michael Rees Davis, Jeffrey Kneebone, and Kevin Short; Mark Gibson. (July 13 at 2.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

NEW YORK GRAND OPERA—Vincent La Selva directs concert performances. July 10 at 7:30: "La Traviata." . . . ¶ July 17 at 7:30: "La Bohème." (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playground, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary.)

AMATO OPERA COMPANY—Baritone George Maldonado directs a program of zarzuela excerpts and classic Hispanic music. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. July 13 at 7:30 and July 14 at 2:30.)

NATIONAL CHORALE—Martin Josman directs concert excerpts from operettas by Romberg, Herbert, and Friml. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. July 16 at 7:30; rain date July 22. No tickets necessary.)

IN TOWN—CONCERTS

MOSTLY MOZART FESTIVAL—The opening concerts of the festival, which hits the quarter-century mark during this Mozart bicentennial year, and which runs through Aug. 24. July 9 at 8:30 and July 10 at 8: The Festival Orchestra, conducted by Gerard Schwarz, performs a Mozart program comprising the "Nozze di Figaro" overture; the Symphony in D, K. 320 (derived from the "Post Horn Serenade"); the First Flute Concerto, with James Galway; and the Piano Concerto in E-Flat, K. 271 (the "Jeunehomme"), featuring André Watts. . . . ¶ July 11 at 8: The Tokyo String Quartet, with guests James Galway (flute) and Raphael Hillyer (viola), perform an all-Mozart program. . . . NOTE: In a pre-concert recital, beginning at 7 and open to ticket-holders, Mr. Galway and members of the quartet play two Mozart flute quartets. . . . ¶ July 12-13 at 8: Gerard Schwarz conducts the Festival Orchestra in a program

Robert Levin, at Mostly Mozart and Tanglewood

that includes symphonies by Schubert and Michael Haydn as well as several Mozart works with solo violin (featuring Isaac Stern). . . . NOTE: In pre-concert recitals, beginning both nights at 7 and open to ticket-holders, the Four Nations Ensemble offers early harpsichord concertos by Mozart, along with trios by Johann Schobert, a Parisian whose works served as a thematic and structural source for several of Mozart's early concertos; Mozart's father, however, later reviled Schobert as "not at all the man he is said to be; he flatters to one's face and is utterly false." . . . ¶ July 14 at 8: Christopher Hogwood conducts Boston's Handel & Haydn Society Orchestra in an all-Mozart program: the Symphony No. 29; the Piano Concerto in F, K. 459; and the Rondo in A, K. 386—the last two featuring fortepianist Robert Levin, who, in Mozartean fashion, will also improvise on musical themes suggested by the audience. . . . ¶ July 15 at 8: Chamber music by Mozart, performed by violinist Isaac Stern, violist Roberto Diaz, cellist Jian Wang, clarinettist Sharon Kam, and pianist Yefim Bronfman. . . . ¶ July 16 at 8: Gerard Schwarz conducts the Festival Orchestra in Beethoven's Second Symphony and Mozart's Symphony No. 20, K. 133. Katia and Marielle Labèque are the soloists in Mozart's Concerto for Two Pianos, K. 365, and Barry Tuckwell is featured in the composer's Third Horn Concerto. . . . ¶ July 17 at 8: Same as the preceding concert, but with Mr. Tuckwell playing Mozart's Fourth Horn Concerto. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030.)

BARGEMUSIC—Peter Rejto interprets Bach's Fifth Suite for Unaccompanied Cello; Stephanie Brown performs Beethoven's Piano Sonata, Op. 57 (the "Appassionata"); and both offer Brahms' E-Minor Sonata for Cello and

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Piano. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. July 11-12 at 7:30 and July 14 at 4.)

New York Philharmonic—In its annual series of free outdoor concerts. Samuel Wong conducts excerpts from Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet" and Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony. **Central Park's Great Lawn,** July 15 at 8, with fireworks following the concert. . . . **Pelham Bay Park,** the Bronx, July 17 at 8. (For rain date information, call 875-5709.)

Gerald Morton—The organist's program includes music by Bach, Vierne, and Dupré, as well as premières of works by Eugene W. Hancock and David Hurd. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. July 16 at 7. Admission by contribution.)

OUT OF TOWN

Tanglewood—July 10 at 8:30: Christopher Hogwood conducts the Handel & Haydn Society Orchestra in an all-Mozart program: the Symphony No. 29; the Piano Concerto in F, K. 459; and the Rondo in A, K. 386—the last two featuring fortepianist Robert Levin, who will also improvise on musical themes suggested by the audience. . . . ¶ July 12 at 9: John Nelson conducts the Boston Symphony in Beethoven's Second Symphony, Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto (featuring Joshua Bell), and the ballet music from Mozart's "Idomeneo." . . . ¶ July 13 at 8:30: Mozart's "Idomeneo," semi-staged, featuring Renée Fleming, Hildegard Behrens, Frederica von Stade, and Anthony Rolfe Johnson. Seiji Ozawa conducts the Boston Symphony and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus. . . . ¶ July 14 at 2:30: John Nelson conducts Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony, Stravinsky's "Pulcinella" Suite, and Mozart's B-flat Major Piano Concerto, K. 456 (with Imogen Cooper). . . . ¶ July 16 at 8:30: John Williams conducts the Boston Pops. . . . ¶ July 17 at 8:30: Mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade and pianist Martin Katz present songs by Schubert, Puccini, Respighi, Satie, Poulenc, Messiaen, and others. (Lenox, Mass. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1940.)

Caramoor Music Festival—July 11 at 4:15: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble performs quintets by J. C. Bach and Prokofiev, as well as "Variations on Two Cantigas de Santa Maria," by Vittorio Rieti. . . . ¶ July 12 at 9: The Chamber Orchestra of St. Luke's presents an all-Bach concert: the First "Brandenburg" Concerto, the B-Minor Orchestral Suite (with solo flutist Elizabeth Mann), the Harpsichord Concerto in D Major, BWV 1054 (featuring Robert Wolinsky), and the "Kreuzstab" Cantata No. 56 (with baritone William Sharp). . . . ¶ July 13 at 8:30: André Previn begins a three-week residency at the festival, conducting the Orchestra of St. Luke's in music by Haydn (his "Miracle" Symphony No. 96) and Mozart (his overture to "Così fan Tutte" and his Sinfonia Concertante, K. 364, featuring violinist Young Uck Kim and violist Heiichiro Ohyama). . . . ¶ July 14 at 5:30: Cellist Gary Hoffman and Mr. Previn (here appearing as a pianist) perform Brahms' First Cello Sonata; and Messrs. Kim and Ohyama join them for a pair of E-Flat-Major Piano Quartets (Mozart's K. 493 and Schumann's Op. 47). (Katonah, N.Y. For information about tickets, call 1-914 232-1252.)

Norfolk Chamber Music Festival—July 12 at 8:30: The Golub-Kaplan-Carr Piano Trio plays music by Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann. . . . ¶ July 13 at 8:30: The Tokyo String Quartet performs quartets by Mozart and Bartók, as well as Schumann's Piano Quintet (with pianist David Golub). (Route 44, Norfolk, Conn. For information about tickets, call 1-203 542-5537.)

TillesFest '91—Kurt Masur conducts the New York Philharmonic in Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony and his incidental music to "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (the latter featuring narrator B. D. Wong, soprano Margaret Brooks, mezzo-soprano Mary Ann Hart, and the New York Choral Artists). (Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, C. W. Post Campus of Long Island University, Brookville, Long Island. 1-516 626-3100. July 13 at 8 and July 14 at 7:30.)

Waterloo Festival Orchestra—Richard Bradshaw conducts Weber's "Der Freischütz" Overture and Nielsen's Fourth Symphony (the "Inextinguishable"), and Gil Shaham is featured in Sibelius's Violin Concerto. (Waterloo Village, Stanhope, N.J. July 13 at 8:30. For ticket and travel information, call 1-201 347-4700.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK
PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Morrissey—As the co-star of the most important British pop group of the eighties—the Smiths—Steven Patrick Morrissey altered a generation's idea of what a great pop song could mean to your everyday life. The band was as prolific as Elvis Costello, and its songs were everywhere on the British charts in the mid-eighties. By 1988, after a well-publicized divorce from his sterling guitarist, Johnny Marr, Morrissey was on his own, writing songs with new partners and, against all odds, keeping his mischievous confrontational style sharp. His songwriting without Marr has lost some of its sparkle but none of its swing or gallows humor. Tunes such as "Every Day Is Like Sunday" and "Suedehead" stand up to his very best work with the Smiths, even if his fascination with the do's and don'ts of adolescent sex is getting tired. His latest album, "Kill Uncle," is a thin, timid record when compared to the dizzying perfection of his previous release, "Bona Drag." (Maybe it's time for him to drop some of the masochistic longing in his music and deal with actual relationships.) For his first solo tour, Manchester's greatest star has brought with him a new, boisterous neo-rockabilly band that should shake some of these new tunes up. He's got little to prove—all the crowd will want is a quick feel of his majesty—and anyone who's seen him lip-synching in Death Valley in a black see-through chemise knows of his shameless self-adoration. He's become his own cover star, but shining through all the posing is a pop-music treasure—a capricious talent. (Jones Beach Theatre. 1-516 221-1000. July 10 at 8. . . . ¶ Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. July 13 at 8.)

Crystal Waters—There's no escaping the chorus of "Gypsy Woman," Waters' first single: "La Da Dee, La Da Da" has become the summer's preëminent "hook," ubiquitous at street fairs, in clubs, at the beach. You almost forget that the rest of the lyric makes a statement about homelessness. (Note to trivia buffs: the singer *is* related to Ethel Waters—she's her great-niece.) The Nits, Pop's Cool Love, and Tam Tam Go are also on the bill. (Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. 473-7171. July 14 at 9:30.)

Daryl Hall and John Oates—The most successful recording duo in the history of pop music, Hall and Oates have had their ups ("She's Gone") and downs ("Maneater"). They have never become critics' darlings, and, usually, the more popular one of their albums is the less merit it has. The duo's last album, "Change of Season," was one of their least popular, and, true to form, one of their best. Daryl Hall, who's always done the bulk of the work, is a terrific, distinctive soul vocalist, and his tunes on the record were among the most convincing he's written. This concert could prove that anyone who isn't listening is just out of touch. (Jones Beach Theatre. July 16 at 8.)

Steve Winwood—Madison Square Garden. July 9 at 8. . . . ¶ Jones Beach Theatre. July 12-13 at 8.

Chicago—With the Triplets. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. July 10 at 8.)

Keith Sweat—Radio City Music Hall. July 11 at 8.

AC/DC—With L.A. Guns. (Madison Square Garden. July 12 at 8.)

Gipsy Kings—With Mory Kanté and Cheb Khaled, in a Bastille Day celebration. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playground, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 14 at 3. No tickets necessary. For rain-date information, call 360-2777.)

Yes—Madison Square Garden. July 15 at 8.

Joe Jackson—Radio City Music Hall. July 15-16 at 8.

Fishbone—Palladium. July 16 at 8.

Jones Beach Theatre—The rest of this week's lineup: July 11: Bob Dylan, with Laura Nyro. . . . ¶ July 14: "The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber," featuring Michael Crawford. . . . ¶ July 15: Bruce Hornsby & the Range, with Rosanne Cash. (1-516 221-1000. Evenings at 8.)

Jazz in July—Opening performances of the 92nd Street Y's annual summer series. July 16 at 8: Walt Levinsky and the Great American Swing Band, Carol Woods, and Dick Hyman. . . . ¶ July 17 at 8: Kenny Davern and Giora Feidman. (Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Through July 25.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Mets—Vs. the San Diego Padres, July 11-12 at 7:40, July 13 at 7:10, and July 14 at 1:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the San Francisco Giants, July 15-16 at 7:40 and July 17 at 1:40.

Yankees—Away until they meet the Seattle Mariners, on July 23.

(The Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499, and the Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 293-6000.)

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. . . . At Monmouth Park, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays, except Mondays and Thursdays, at 1:05. . . . At Atlantic City Race Course: Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:15. . . . **Trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays at 8, and Tuesdays at 1; Sundays at 6. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. . . . At Saratoga Raceway, Saratoga Springs: Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:45.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Park Alert—Bryant Park, the green space behind the New York Public Library on Fifth Avenue, closed three years ago for renovations, and people were beginning to wonder whether it would *ever* reopen. Well, don't get too excited—it's not officially open yet, but the western portion will now accommodate lunchtime visitors. Bring a sandwich and a book, and bask.

Swing Dancing—By the fountain in Lincoln Center. July 10: Raul Jaurena and Marga Mitchell. . . . ¶ July 11: Designer. . . . ¶ July 12: Daniel Ponce. . . . ¶ July 13: Swing Fever. . . . ¶ July 17: The Emery Davis Orchestra. (Evenings at 8:15. Tickets available on the nights of the events.)

"Shakespeare Weekend"—At the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, on July 13-14, naturalists lead tours of the Shakespeare Garden; at 2 on both days, by the Alfred T. White Memorial, members of the Kings County Shakespeare Company perform in an adaptation of "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking-Glass." (1000 Washington Ave., near Grand Army Plaza. For more information, call 1-718 622-4433.)

Walks—July 13 at 1: Citywalks sponsors a tour of Greenwich Village, which meets at the corner of Fifth Ave. and 8th St. . . . ¶ July 14 at 1: A stroll around Chelsea, sponsored by the Museum of the City of New York, which includes such sites as the General Theological Seminary and the Chelsea Hotel. For information and reservations, call 534-1672. . . . ¶ July 14 at 1: A walk around the neighborhood of Grand Central Terminal, sponsored by Citywalks. Meets at the corner of Park Ave. and 42nd St. . . . ¶ July 14 at 2:30: A tour of the Upper West Side, sponsored by Adventure on a Shoestring. For information and reservations, call 265-2663.

Crystal Waters

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

EAST SIDE

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Slacker" (directed by Richard Linklater).
Theatre 2: "The Comfort of Strangers" (†).
Theatre 3: "La Femme Nikita" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Reflecting Skin" (Philip Ridley), with Lindsay Duncan.
Theatre 5: "An Angel at My Table" (Joan Campion), with Kerry Fox.
Theatre 6: Through July 9: "Tatie Danielle" (Etienne Chatiliez, in French), with Tsilla Chelton. From July 10: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford and Annette Bening.

PUBLIC THEATRE, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
July 8: Theatre closed.
July 9: (Separate admissions) "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (1959, Alain Resnais; in French), with Emmanuèle Riva and Eiji Okada; and "In the Realm of the Senses" (1977, Nagisa Oshima; in Japanese), with Eiko Matsuda and Tatsuya Fuji.
July 10-11: (Separate admissions) "Hiroshima, Mon Amour"; and "In the Realm of Passion" (1978, Oshima; in Japanese).
July 12-14: "Dames" (1934, Ray Enright), with Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler, and Joan Blondell; and "Footlight Parade" (†).
July 15: Theatre closed.
July 16-17: "The Gang's All Here" (1943, Busby Berkeley), with Alice Faye, Carmen Miranda, Charlotte Greenwood, and James Ellison; and "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" (1949, Berkeley), with Frank Sinatra, Esther Williams, and Gene Kelly.

MOVIELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).
Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (James Cameron), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Robert Patrick.
Theatre 3: "Dying Young" (†).

LOEWS VILLAGE THEATRE VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Thelma & Louise" (†).
Theatre 2: "City Slickers" (†).
Theatre 3: "City Slickers" (†).
Theatre 4: "Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead" (Stephen Herek), with Christina Applegate.
Theatre 5: "Truth or Dare" (†).
Theatre 6: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore, in Italian), with Philippe Noiret and Salvatore Cascio.
Theatre 7: Through July 11: "Thelma & Louise" (†). From July 12: "Boyz N the Hood" (John Singleton).

CINEMA VILLAGE 12TH STREET, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
"Eating" (†).

VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "The Nasty Girl" (Michael Verhoeven, in German), with Lena Stolze.
Theatre 2: "What About Bob?" (†).
Theatre 3: "Ju Dou" (†).
Theatre 4: "Dark Obsession" (Nicholas Broomfield), with Gabriel Byrne and Amanda Donohoe.
Theatre 5: "The Rocketeer" (†).
Theatre 6: "Straight Out of Brooklyn" (Matty Rich).
Theatre 7: "Impromptu" (†).

CINEMA VILLAGE 3RD AVENUE, between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
Through July 11: "Extramuros" (Miguel Picazo, in Spanish), with Mercedes Sampietro and Carmen Maura.
From July 12: "Shadow of the Raven" (Hrafn Gunnlaugsson, in Icelandic).

LOEWS 19TH STREET EAST 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: Through July 9: "Hangin' with the Homeboys" (Joseph Vasquez). From July 10: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford and Annette Bening.
Theatre 2: "Soapdish" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.
Theatre 4: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (James Cameron), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Robert Patrick.
Theatre 5: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day."
Theatre 6: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear."

GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"What About Bob?" (†).

BAY CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Dying Young" (†).

MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).
Theatre 2: "Jungle Fever" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Rocketeer" (†).
Theatre 4: Through July 11: "Thelma & Louise" (†). From July 12: "Boyz N the Hood" (John Singleton).

THE MOVIE HOUSES

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 16.

The early-sixties Bronx gangs in "The Wanderers" (playing July 16 at Theatre 80 St. Marks) are more like rowdy social clubs than bands of warriors. The title bunch of teen-age Italian-Americans is led by Ken Wahl, in his fervid, multidimensional acting début. These high schoolers form the center of a sharply observed urban crazy quilt of adolescent joys, fears, and sorrows. The director, Philip Kaufman, and his co-writer and wife, Rose Kaufman, created their heartily anecdotal not-quite-coming-of-age saga from Richard Price's novel. Released in the midsummer of 1979, Kaufman's tense, funny movie never found the first-run audience it deserved, partly because it was beaten to the screen by other '79 gang films, including Walter Hill's "The Warriors" (see page 19). But the reputation of "The Wanderers" continues to grow. This isn't just a gang film; it's an end-of-an-era story. It's closer to "Diner," which came out three years later, than to any other gang film.

Kaufman peppers the film with sofa and car-seat sex as well as psychological and physical violence, and fills each sequence with nuanced, pungent performances. In one classic scene, Wahl and a fellow-Wanderer (the antsy, touching John Friedrich) fix a strip-poker game so that Toni Kalem (note-perfect as Wahl's Bronx princess) and Karen Allen (his dream girl) end up close to naked. In another, the title song (sung by Dion) plays on the soundtrack while the gang struts up an alleyway. As the Wanderers' anthem builds, their jackets turn into proud mantles, and the fire escapes become parapets. What revs up the movie and keeps it humming is the driving energy of early rock, with its innocent yet rebellious spirit, and its theme that teens must find their own ways to love and fight.

LOEWS 34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.
Theatre 2: "City Slickers" (†).
Theatre 3: Through July 9: "Soapdish" (†). From July 10: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford and Annette Bening.

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Backdraft" (†).

EASTSIDE CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Truth or Dare" (†).

SUTTON 1 AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "The Rocketeer" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Rocketeer" (†).

GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Dying Young" (†).

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Straight Out of Brooklyn" (Matty Rich).

MANHATTAN TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Jungle Fever" (†).
Theatre 2: "Jungle Fever" (†).

59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.

BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).
Theatre 2: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

CINEMA I, CINEMA II, AND CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "What About Bob?" (†).
Theatre 2: "Thelma & Louise" (†).
Theatre 3: "Every Other Weekend" (Nicole Garcia, in French), with Nathalie Baye.

GEMINI 1 AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (James Cameron), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Robert Patrick.
Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day."

BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Backdraft" (†).

LOEWS NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.
Theatre 2: "City Slickers" (†).

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Miracle" (†).

LOEWS TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
Through July 9: Theatre closed.
From July 10: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford and Annette Bening.

U. A. EAST, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen and Priscilla Presley.

PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Jungle Fever" (†).
Theatre 2: Through July 11: "Backdraft" (†). From July 12: "Point Break" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Patrick Swayze, Keanu Reeves, Gary Busey, Lori Petty, John McGinley, and James Le Gros.

86TH STREET EAST TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: Through July 11: "The Rocketeer" (†). From July 12: "Boyz N the Hood" (John Singleton).
Theatre 2: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through July 16: "The Runner" (1985, directed by Amir Naderi; in Farsi). From July 17: "The Famine Within" (Katherine Gilday), a documentary.
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: Through July 9: "Paris Is Burning" (Jennie Livingston), a documentary. From July 10: To be announced.

BLEECKER MOVIE HOUSE, 144 Bleecker St. (807-9205)
Theatre 1: "Poison" (Todd Haynes).
Theatre 2: (Separate admissions) "The Golden Boat" (Raul Ruiz); and "Forever Activists—Stories from the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade" (Judith Montell), a documentary.

WAVERLY 1 AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

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Theatre 1: "Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.
Theatre 2: "Jungle Fever" (†).

8TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Alice" (Woody Allen), with Mia Farrow.

ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Soapdish" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Truly, Madly, Deeply" (†).
Theatre 2: "Drowning by Numbers" (Peter Greenaway).
Theatre 3: "Backdraft" (†).
Theatre 4: Through July 11: "Spartacus" (1960, Stanley Kubrick), with Kirk Douglas. From July 12: "Soapdish" (†).

CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "City Slickers" (†).
Theatre 2: "Dying Young" (†).
Theatre 3: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).
Theatre 4: "Jungle Fever" (†).
Theatre 5: "City Slickers" (†).
Theatre 6: "Jungle Fever" (†).
Theatre 7: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).
Theatre 8: "Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.
Theatre 9: Through July 11: "Dying Young" (†). From July 12: "Point Break" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Patrick Swayze, Keanu Reeves, Gary Busey, Lori Petty, John McGinley, and James Le Gros.

23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Backdraft" (†).
Theatre 2: "Truth or Dare" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Rocketeer" (†).

GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through July 9: "Thelma & Louise" (†).
From July 10: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford.

WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Truth or Dare" (†).
Theatre 2: "Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.
Theatre 3: "Jungle Fever" (†).
Theatre 4: Through July 9: "Spartacus" (1960, Stanley Kubrick), with Kirk Douglas. From July 10: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford and Annette Bening.
Theatre 5: "Ju Dou" (†).
Theatre 6: "Impromptu" (†).

ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Dying Young" (†).

LOEWS FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Soapdish" (†).

57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Impromptu" (†).

CARNEGIE HALL CINEMAS, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Tatie Danielle" (Etienne Chatiliez, in French), with Tsilla Chelton.
Theatre 2: "La Femme Nikita" (†).

LOEWS FINE ARTS, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"My Father's Glory" (Yves Robert, in French), with Julien Ciamaca.

CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Truly, Madly, Deeply" (†).

LOEWS PARAMOUNT, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Soapdish" (†).

62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.

LINCOLN PLAZA 1, 2, AND 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Everybody's Fine" (Giuseppe Tornatore, in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni.
Theatre 2: "Europa Europa" (†).
Theatre 3: "A Paper Wedding" (Michel Brault, in French), with Geneviève Bujold.

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Dying Young" (†).

LOEWS 84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).
Theatre 2: "City Slickers" (†).
Theatre 3: Through July 9: "Thelma & Louise" (†). From July 10: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford and Annette Bening.
Theatre 4: "The Rocketeer" (†).
Theatre 5: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (James Cameron), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Robert Patrick.
Theatre 6: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear."

METRO CINEMA 1 AND 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Jungle Fever" (†).
Theatre 2: "Jungle Fever" (†).

OLYMPIA 1 AND 11, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Backdraft" (†).
Theatre 2: (Separate admissions) "Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead" (Stephen Herek), with Christina Applegate; and "What About Bob?" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION CENTER, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).
Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (directed by James Cameron), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Robert Patrick.
Theatre 3: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day."
Theatre 4: "Kickboxer 2" (Albert Pyun), with Sasha Mitchell.
Theatre 5: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day."
Theatre 6: Through July 11: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day." From July 12: "Point Break" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Patrick Swayze, Keanu Reeves, Gary Busey, Lori Petty, John McGinley, and James Le Gros.

EMBASSY 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"The Rocketeer" (†).

EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.
Theatre 2: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear."
Theatre 3: "Straight Out of Brooklyn" (Matty Rich).

LOEWS ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
Through July 11: "City Slickers" (†).
From July 12: "Boyz N the Hood" (John Singleton).

NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Jungle Fever" (†).
Theatre 2: "Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.

WEST SIDE CINEMA 1 AND 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead" (Stephen Herek), with Christina Applegate.
Theatre 2: "A Rage in Harlem" (Bill Duke), with Forest Whitaker, Gregory Hines, Robin Givens, and Danny Glover.

REVIVAL HOUSES

BIOGRAPH CINEMA, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
July 8: "The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex" (1939, directed by Michael Curtiz), with Bette Davis, Errol Flynn, and Olivia de Havilland; and "The Virgin Queen" (1955, Henry Koster), with Davis, Richard Todd, and Joan Collins.
July 9-10: "Cocoon" (1985, Ron Howard) and "Cocoon: The Return" (1988, Daniel Petrie), both with Don Ameche, Wilford Brimley, Brian Dennehy, Hume Cronyn, Jack Gilford, Maureen Stapleton, Gwen Verdon, Jessica Tandy, and Steve Guttenberg.
July 11-13: "Jean de Florette" (†); and "Manon of the Spring" (1987, Claude Berri; in French), with Yves Montand, Daniel Auteuil, and Emmanuelle Béart.
July 14-15: "The French Connection" (†); and "French Connection II" (1975, John Frankenheimer), with Gene Hackman and Fernando Rey.
July 16-17: "Claudia" (1943, Edmund Goulding), with Dorothy McGuire, Robert Young, and Ina Claire; and "Claudia and David" (1946, Walter Lang), with McGuire, Young, and Mary Astor.

FILM FORUM 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
July 8: "Orchestra Wives" (1942, Archie Mayo), with Ann Rutherford, George Montgomery, and Lynn Bari; and film clips of the Nicholas Brothers.
July 9: "Odds Against Tomorrow" (1959, Robert Wise), with Robert Ryan, Harry Belafonte, and Ed Begley; and "I Want to Live!" (1958, Robert Wise), with Susan Hayward.
July 10: "Blues in the Night" (1941, Anatole Litvak), with Priscilla Lane, Richard Whorf, Betty Field, and Wallace Ford; and a program of Warner Brothers jazz shorts from the twenties, thirties, and forties.
July 11: To be announced.
From July 12: "White Dog" (1982, Samuel Fuller), with Paul Winfield, Kristy McNichol, Burl Ives, Fuller, and Paul Bartel.

NEWMAN THEATRE, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
July 8: Theatre closed.
July 9-10: "Orpheus" (1949, Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Maria Casarès, and François Périer; and "Oedipus Rex" (1967, Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian), with Franco Citti and Silvana Mangano.
July 11: "I Know Where I'm Going" (†); and "The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp" (1943, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with Roger Livesey, Anton Walbrook, and Deborah Kerr.
July 12-13: "Rashomon" (1951, Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune, Machiko Kyo, Masayuki Mori, and Takashi Shimura; and "Dodes'ka-den" (1971, Kurosawa; in Japanese).
July 14: "Rebecca" (1940, Alfred Hitchcock), with Joan Fontaine, Laurence Olivier, Judith Anderson, George Sanders, and Florence Bates; and "Dead of Night" (†).
July 15: Theatre closed.
July 16-17: "Straw Dogs" (1972, Sam Peckinpah), with Dustin Hoffman and Susan George; and "Vengeance Is Mine" (1979, Shohei Imamura; in Japanese).

John Singleton, director of "Boyz N the Hood"

THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
July 8: "Vampyr" (1932, Carl Dreyer; in German), with Julian West, Henriette Gérard, Rena Mandel, and Sybille Schmitz; and "Day of Wrath" (1943, Carl Dreyer; in Danish), with Lisbeth Movin and Anna Svierkier.
July 9: "Home from the Hills" (1960, Vincente Minnelli), with Robert Mitchum, Eleanor Parker, George Hamilton, and George Peppard; and "The Night of the Hunter" (1955, Charles Laughton), with Robert Mitchum, Shelley Winters, and Lillian Gish.
July 10: "This Gun for Hire" (1942, Frank Tuttle), with Veronica Lake, Alan Ladd, and Laird Cregar; and "The Glass Key" (1942, Stuart Heisler), with Brian Donlevy, Lake, and Ladd.
July 11: "The Rose Tattoo" (1955, Daniel Mann), with Anna Magnani, Burt Lancaster, Marisa Pavan, Ben Cooper, Virginia Grey, and Jo Van Fleet; and "The Fugitive Kind" (1960, Sidney Lumet), with Marlon Brando, Magnani, and Joanne Woodward.
July 12-13: "Rope" (1948, Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart, John Dall, and Farley Granger; and "The Man Who Knew Too Much" (1956, Hitchcock), with Stewart and Doris Day.
July 14: "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" (1967, David Swift), with Robert Morse, Michele Lee, and Rudy Vallée; and "The Producers" (1968, Mel Brooks), with Zero Mostel, Dick Shawn, and Gene Wilder.
July 15: "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (1959, Alain Resnais; in French), with Emmanuele Riva and Eiji Okada; and "Muriel" (1963,

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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

Resnais; in French), with Delphine Seyrig. July 16: "The Wanderers" (see blurb on page 14) and "The Warriors" (†).
July 17: "Red Desert" (1964, Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian), with Monica Vitti and Richard Harris; and "Blow-Up" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—July 8 at 2:30: "Endless Dream" (1986, directed by Lauro Escorel Filho; in Portuguese), with Carlos Alberto Riccelli. . . . ¶ July 8 at 6 and July 12 at 2:30: "When the Daltons Rode" (1940, George Marshall), with Randolph Scott, Kay Francis, Brian Donlevy, Broderick Crawford, and Stuart Erwin. . . . ¶ July 9 at 2:30: "Rio Lobo" (1970, Howard Hawks), with John Wayne. . . . ¶ July 9 at 6 and July 14 at 2: "The Sleeping Car Murders" (1965, Costa-Gavras; in French), with Simone Signoret and Yves Montand. . . . ¶ July 11 at 2:30 and July 13 at 5: "High Noon" (1952, Fred Zinnemann), with Gary Cooper, Grace Kelly, and Lloyd Bridges. . . . ¶ July 11 at 6 and July 13 at 1: "The Wheel" (1922, Abel Gance; a silent film, with French intertitles), with Séverin Mars, Gabriel de Gravonne, and Ivy Close. . . . ¶ July 12 at 6 and July 14 at 5: "Rheingold" (1977, Niklaus Schilling; in German). . . . ¶ July 15 at 2:30: "Beggars of Life" (1928, William Wellman), with Wallace Beery, Louise Brooks, and Richard Arlen; and "Wild Boys of the Road" (1933, Wellman), with Frankie Darro, Rochelle Hudson, and Dorothy Coonan. . . . ¶ July 15 at 6: "The Train" (1955, John Frankenheimer), with Burt Lancaster, Paul Scofield, and Jeanne Moreau.

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (477-2714)—July 10 at 7 and 8:30, July 11 at 9, July 12 at 10:15, July 13 at 8:30, and July 14 at 9: "Jimi Hendrix at the Isle of Wight" (1991, Murray Lerner), a documentary of the 1970 music festival. . . . ¶ July 11 at 7, July 12 at 8:30 and 11:30, July 13 at 9:45 and 11:30, and July 14 at 3 and 7: "Festival" (1967, Lerner). . . . ¶ July 12 at 6: A program of seven short films. . . . ¶ July 13 at 6: "Passage Through a Ritual" (1991, Stan Brakhage). . . . ¶ July 14 at 5: "Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son" (1969, Ken Jacobs). . . . ¶ July 17 at 6: A program of four short films. . . . ¶ July 17 at 6 and 8: "Dead Ringer" (1981, Allan Nicholls). . . . ¶ July 17 at 8: "My Dinner with Abbie" (1989, Nancy Cohen) and "Guedra" (1991, Andrea Beeman).

Museum of Television and Radio, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"On Stage at Carnegie Hall: A Centennial Celebration." July 9-13: "The Ed Sullivan Show" (1959, CBS), a program honoring Richard Rodgers, broadcast from Carnegie Hall; and a half-hour show of news stories and commercials featuring Carnegie Hall. . . . From July 16: "Carnegie Hall's Restoration: The 28-Week Miracle" (1988, WNET) and "Carnegie Hall at 100: A Place of Dreams" (1991, PBS). Showings Tuesdays at 2:30 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 2:30. . . . ¶ "A Salute to Monty Python." July 9-13: "Fawlty Towers" (1975, BBC) and "Cheers" (1987, Paramount), both with John Cleese. . . . From July 16: "Rutland Weekend Television" (1975, BBC). Showings Tuesdays at 12:15, 2:30, and 5:30; Wednesdays through Fridays at 12:15 and 2:30; and Saturdays at 12:15.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, 5th Ave. at 81st St. (879-5500)—July 12 at 6: "La Dolce Vita" (1960, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni, Anita Ekberg, and Anouk Aimée. . . . ¶ July 13 at 6: "Notorious" (1946, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Ingrid Bergman, and Claude Rains.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"Leo McCarey: The King of Comedy," a program of films directed by McCarey. July 9-10 at 2: Two television programs by McCarey—"You Can Change the World" (1951), with Loretta Young; and "Meet the Governor" (1955), with Herb Shriner. . . . ¶ July 11 at 2: "Let's Go Native" (1930), with Jack Oakie and Jeanette MacDonald. . . . ¶ July 12 at 2: "Wild Company" (1930), with H. B. Warner and Frank Albertson. . . . ¶ July 13 and July 16 at 2: "Part-Time Wife" (1930), with Edmund Lowe and Leila Hyams. . . . ¶ July 13 at 4 and July 17 at 2: "Indiscreet" (1931), with Gloria Swanson and Ben Lyons. . . . ¶ July 14 at 2: "The Kid from Spain" (1932), with Eddie Cantor. . . . ¶ July 14 at 4: "Duck Soup" (1933), with the Marx Brothers.

Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (662-2133)—July 10 at 8: "Metropolis" (1926, Fritz Lang; a German silent film), with Brigitte Helm, Alfred Abel, Gustav Fröhlich, and Rudolf Klein-Rogge. . . . ¶ July 17 at 8: "The Black Pirate" (1926, Albert Parker; silent), with Douglas Fairbanks and Billie Dove. Organ accompaniment written and played by Lee Erwin.

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—July 10 at 12:30 and 6: "Les Portes de la Nuit" (1946, Marcel Carné; in French), with Yves Montand, Nathalie Nattier, Pierre Brasseur, and Serge Reggiani. . . . ¶ July 10 at 3:15 and 8:45: "The Crucible" (1957, Raymond Rouleau), with Montand, Simone Signoret, Mylène Demongeot, and Rouleau. . . . ¶ July 17 at 12:30 and 6: "Secret Meeting" (1959, Julien Duvivier; in French), with Danielle Darrieux, Bernard Blier, Reggiani, and Lino Ventura. . . . ¶ July 17 at 3:15 and 8:45: "The Black Monocle" (1961, Georges Lautner; in French, with no English subtitles), with Paul Meurisse, Blier, Pierre Blanchar, and Marie Dubois.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Backdraft—This urban disaster/action movie makes the audience laugh just once: when a stalwart fireman (Scott Glenn), still on the scene of his latest conquered blaze, takes a drag on a cigarette. It's one of the few grand-old-movie gestures that click in what amounts to a compendium of men-at-work clichés. The plot centers on estranged brothers Kurt Russell (a soon-to-be-legendary firefighter) and William Baldwin (an anxious apprentice), who work out their differences in the midst of mysterious arsons and towering infernos. Gregory Widen's script is like a *Mad* parody played straight, full of "Scenes We Wouldn't Like to See." The effects are boggling, but the director, Ron Howard, employs them like a cross between a night-club hypnotist and a hardware salesman—his characters murmur about fire's mesmerizing and bestial qualities, then he hits the audience with flames and hoses. Russell is appealingly brash until a bogus subplot forces him to suggest borderline psychosis. Jennifer Jason Leigh and Rebecca De Mornay also show up, but only Robert De Niro, as an arson investigator, and Donald Sutherland, as a pyromaniac, rise above the material.—M.S. (34th Street East, Beekman, Quad Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Olympia. . . . ¶ Park & 86th Street Cinemas; through July 11.)

Blow-Up (1966)—When the film came out, Michelangelo Antonioni's mixture of suspense with vagueness and confusion seemed to have a numbing fascination for some people which they associated with art and intellectuality. He conducts a leisurely tour of "swinging" London, lingering over the flashiest routes and dawdling over a pot party and a mini-orgy, while ponderously suggesting that the mod scene represents a condition of spiritual malaise in which people live only for the sensations of the moment. Yet despite Antonioni's negativism, the world he presents looks harmless, and sex without "connecting" doesn't really seem so bad. The best part of the movie is an ingeniously edited sequence in which the fashion-photographer hero (David Hemmings) blows up a series of photographs and discovers that he has inadvertently photographed a murder. With Vanessa Redgrave, Sarah Miles, Verushka, Jane Birkin, and Peter Bowles. Freely adapted by Antonioni and Tonino Guerra from a short story by Julio Cortázar, with English dialogue by Edward Bond. Cinematography by Carlo Di Palma.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 17.)

City Slickers—This feel-good comedy, directed by Ron Underwood from a script by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel, is a depressingly efficient piece of Hollywood product. The hero, Mitch Robbins (Billy Crystal), is a thirty-nine-year-old New York family man who's going through a killer midlife crisis. His wife (Patricia Wettig) gets so fed up with his moping that she virtually orders him to take a vacation with his buddies Ed (Bruno Kirby) and Phil (Daniel Stern); Ed, a daredevil, macho type, has arranged for them to spend two weeks on a real cattle drive out West. Mitch's wife looks him in the eye, and says earnestly, "Go and find your smile"—and, ninety minutes later, there it is, a grin as big as all outdoors. His pals pick up the odd nugget of wisdom along the trail, too. The movie alternates predictable tenderfoot gags (sore behinds, stampedes, and the like) with long, ludicrous passages of group-therapy-on-the-range. Jack Palance, as Curly, the trail boss, manages some dry, macabre comic effects, and the animals are good—they're interesting to look at, and they don't make bad jokes. You can't help sympathizing with the cattle; by the time the movie is over, you know what it feels like to be part of the herd. Also with Helen Slater.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/17/91.) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ Loews Astor Plaza; through July 11.)

The Comfort of Strangers—Harold Pinter's screenplay, adapted from a novel by Ian McEwan, is a kinky contemporary variation on the sort of plot that made Victorian readers shiver—the story of innocents lured into the clutches of charming villains. The innocents here are an unmarried English couple (Natasha Richardson and Rupert Everett) vacationing in Venice; the evil seducers are a husband and wife (Christopher Walken and Helen Mirren) whose tastes run to voyeurism and sadomasochism; the dread lair in which the monsters toy with their prey is a huge, ornately furnished apartment with a spectacular view of the city. The director, Paul Schrader, dresses his characters in Armani and sets the camera in motion to swirl gracefully around them, picking up miragelike shimmers from the canals and beautiful but ominous architectural details; the languorous camera movements create an authentically gothic sense of catastrophe just around the corner. Walken glides effortlessly through his role as the embodiment of Old World evil. He gives the character a lordly, sinister air, and suggests, as well, that he's wearing something really odd underneath his superbly tailored white suits. And Richardson is characteristically amazing: she brings a touch of humanity to this rather formal party. The movie improves on the novel by jettisoning its dubious psychology and its pretensions to literary significance. Schrader treats the story as an elegant horror-movie game, a trick done with mirrors, and he carries it off. Dante Spinotti's cinematography and Gianni Quaranta's production design contribute to the luxurious, decadent atmosphere. Music by Angelo Badalamenti.—T.R. (4/8/91) (Angelika Film Center.)

Dead of Night (1945)—Michael Redgrave plays a schizophrenic ventriloquist tormented by his dummy, and his overpowering performance—a small work of art—lifts this five-part English production above the elegant, sophisticated entertainment it aspired to be. The individual stories are meant to accumulate in intensity, until the trap closes in the surreal climax—an encompassing ghost story. When the film was first shown in this country, two of the stories were omitted, and though these were the weakest sequences, the omission made the climax partly unintelligible. The complete version begins with Mervyn Johns' arrival at a country house and proceeds through these five episodes: Antony Baird and Miles Malleson in "room for one more"; Sally Ann Howes in the murdered-child sequence (good material poorly done); Googie Withers and Ralph Michael in the story of the mirror that reflects the crime of an earlier century; Basil Radford and

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Naunton Wayne in the golfers' story told by Roland Culver (which is pretty awful); Michael Redgrave as the ventriloquist, with Hartley Power as his rival and Frederick Valk as the psychoanalyst; then the nightmarish summation. John Baines and Angus MacPhail did the screenplay, using stories by H. G. Wells, E. F. Benson, and themselves; the master writer of English film comedy, T. E. B. Clarke, did the additional dialogue. Directed by Robert Hamer (the mirror story), Basil Dearden, Charles Crichton, and Alberto Cavalcanti (the ventriloquist sequence). Score by Georges Auric.—P.K. (Newman Theatre; July 14.)

Dying Young—Julia Roberts' vehicles are so closely linked that they resemble a series. Even the "movie tie-in" editions of the original novels "Sleeping with the Enemy" and "Dying Young" sport similar red-white-and-black cover art; it's as if they were installments in a Julia Roberts line of contemporary gothic romances. In her latest outing, America's favorite working girl is the nurse-mate-turned-lover of a leukemia-stricken upper-class twit (Campbell Scott), a cousin of the psychotic U.C.T. in "Enemy" and the mercenary one in "Pretty Woman." The director, Joel Schumacher, and the writer, Richard Friedenberg, simplify and prettify the material. Unlike her counterpart in Marti Leimbach's book, Roberts never two-times her edgy, arrogant lover with a more easygoing man (Vincent D'Onofrio). The onslaught-of-illness stuff is rendered not with emotion but with makeup and lighting. The actors are reduced to models in a film that tries to sell compassion by the shot. With Colleen Dewhurst, Ellen Burstyn, and David Selby.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Bay Cinema, Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Regency.)

At the Biograph Cinema, Robert Young and Dorothy McGuire in "Claudia"

Eating—All the action in Henry Jaglom's film takes place at the fortieth-birthday party of a Southern California woman named Helene (Lisa Richards), and all the characters—thirty-eight of them—are women. None of the women at this party—with the exception of Helene's mother (Frances Bergen), who represents the values of an older generation—can eat without guilt; several of them have clinical eating disorders, for which they hate themselves. Jaglom films them in his usual group-therapy style: the camera remains fixed as characters lob banal confessions and accusations at each other. This is meant to create the illusion of raw emotional truth, but the bulimics' ball Jaglom throws here isn't much of a party, and it's bad therapy, too. Whatever Jaglom may have intended, his film winds up trivializing its theme and humiliating its subjects. He's advertising the movie as "A Very Serious Comedy About Women and Food," but its "serious" message is glibly offensive, and there's nothing funny about it.—T.R. (5/20/91) (Cinema Village 12th Street.)

Europa Europa—This superb film by the Polish director Agnieszka Holland is based on the memoirs of Salomon Perel, a German Jew who spent much of the Second World War passing for Aryan in an élite Hitler Youth academy. The movie dramatizes this almost inconceivable survival story with a surprisingly light touch. It bounds from one jaw-dropping episode to the next with the speed and the unnerving neutrality of a picaresque adventure, and never pauses to judge its ambiguous hero; it's content to let the ironies of his situation collect around him like reflections in dressing-room mirrors. His family's flight from the Nazis begins in 1938, on the eve of his Bar Mitzvah. Solly (played by a remarkable young actor named Marco Hofschneider) lands first in Lodz, Poland, and then in the Soviet Union, where he becomes a star pupil in a Communist school. After the Wehrmacht invades Russia and takes him prisoner, he reincarnates himself as an orphaned "pure" German, an Aryan child wandering in the barbaric eastern wilderness; as translator and mascot, he accompanies the German soldiers on their march through Russia. He's an awfully adaptable kid: attractive, personable, good at languages, and deft at lying. By the time he is initiated into the Hitler Youth, he has already run through several identities, and has proved himself capable of playing his roles with conviction and enthusiasm. We remain, however, constantly aware (as he is) of what his Nazi disguise conceals—his circumcised penis, the irreversible and unambiguous sign of his identity as a Jew. Holland uses this physical evidence of Solly's Jewishness as the fulcrum of the movie's delicately balanced narrative and moral tensions. She shows us the thoroughness of Nazi terror in the pained expression of a teen-age boy who doesn't dare allow himself to be seduced. Also with Julie Delpy, Andre Wilms, Halina Labonarska, and Rene Hofschneider. The real Salomon Perel appears, as himself, in the movie's final scene. In German and Russian.—T.R. (7/1/91) (Lincoln Plaza.)

La Femme Nikita—The end of French cinema as we know it. Written and directed by Luc Besson. With Anne Parillaud, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Tcheky Karyo, and (in a cameo) Jeanne Moreau. In French.—T.R. (Angelika Film Center, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

Footlight Parade (1933)—This came out the same year as two other celebrated Warners musicals—"42nd Street" and "Gold Diggers of 1933"—and it has some silly yet irresistibly wonderful examples of Busby Berkeley's pinwheel choreography. Based, possibly, on Berkeley himself, it's about a young director, played by James Cagney, who whips up ideas for the musical "prologues" that first-run movie palaces used to put on and then stages them. In the latter part of this lopsided movie we get to see three of the finished products; they're built around the songs "Honeymoon Hotel," "By a Waterfall," and "Shanghai Lil." Cagney gives the picture some snap; he dances (in his amazing early-vaudeville style) and rushes around and shows off his Olivier-like eyes; Joan Blondell is tough and honest; Dick Powell sings; and Ruby Keeler dances while bending down anxiously to watch her leaden feet. Also with Guy Kibbee, Billy Barty, Hugh Herbert, Frank McHugh, Ruth Donnelly, Claire Dodd, Herman Bing, Dave O'Brien, Hobart Cavanaugh, and Jimmy Conlin. Directed by Lloyd Bacon; the script is by Manuel Seff and James Seymour; the music is by Harry Warren and Al Dubin, and Sammy Fain and Irving Kahal.—P.K. (Public Theatre; July 12-14.)

The French Connection (1971)—Tracking down a shipment of heroin in New York City. A hugely successful slam-bang thriller that zaps the audience with noise, speed, and brutality. It's certainly exciting, but that excitement isn't necessarily a pleasure. The ominous music keeps tightening the screws and heating things up; the movie is like an aggravated case of New York. It proceeds through chases, pistol-whippings, slashings, murders, snipings, and more chases for close to two hours. This is what's meant to give you a charge. There are no good guys. Gene Hackman plays the lowlife police detective who cracks the case; porkpie-hatted and lewd and boorish, he's also a sadist. With Fernando Rey, Roy Scheider, Tony LoBianco, and Marcel Bozzufi. Music by Don Ellis; cinematography by Owen Roizman. The script, by

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IN BRIEF–Cont'd

Ernest Tidyman, was based on the supposedly factual account by Robin Moore in a book about the largest narcotics haul in New York police history up to that time. William Friedkin directed. Academy Awards: Best Picture, Director, Actor (Hackman), Screenplay.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; July 14-15.)

I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING (1945)—This romance is set in large part during a gale in the Western Isles of Scotland. It features dense fog, a squall, and a huge, roaring whirlpool. It also features Art Deco images of the young Wendy Hiller as an assured, impudent working girl who is scheduled to marry a rotten-rich, middle-aged tycoon, until she's caught in that storm. She meets a kind-faced naval officer (Roger Livesey); he's the impoverished Laird of Kiloran, and after a few days and nights of his gentle Gaelic voice she's thoroughly confused. Written, produced, and directed by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, this is a charmer of a movie. In a party sequence, everything else stops while we listen to the rapid group singing of the Highlanders: it's a soul-satisfying interlude. The cinematography is by Erwin Hillier; the art direction is by Alfred Junge. With Pamela Brown, Finlay Currie, Nancy Price, Jean Cadell, Catherine Lacey, Valentine Dyall, George Carney, Margot Fitzsimmons, John Laurie, and Petula Clark. (In his autobiography, Powell explained that Livesey couldn't get out of his role in a London play, and a double filled in for him in the exterior scenes; Livesey "never came within five hundred miles of the Western Isles.")—P.K. (Newman Theatre; July 11.)

IMPROMPTU—James Lapine's film is an ebullient and absurdly entertaining account of the famous love affair of George Sand and Frédéric Chopin. The script, by Sarah Kernochan, makes Sand's wooing and winning of frail, chaste young Chopin into a busy exercise in farce, with a full complement of deception and setbacks and misunderstandings. Celebrities of the Romantic movement—Delacroix, Musset, and Liszt among them—are put through their paces, along with George and Frédéric, in the salons and ballrooms and country houses of eighteen-thirties France; they issue florid declarations of love, hurl barbed epigrams at their rivals, challenge each other to duels, and, over all, make complete asses of themselves in their pursuit of the sublime. They're lively company. The historical figures in this movie are cartoons, but they're cartoons with recognizable human qualities, and the actors look as if they were having a wonderful time charging around in their period costumes. Hugh Grant's Chopin is a brilliant caricature of the Romantic ideal of the artist; he gives the character an air of befuddled unworldliness, and punctuates his readings with delicately timed tubercular coughs. Judy Davis plays Sand—a great actress in a great role. Davis makes Sand's passionate absurdities both funny and tremendously moving; this woman's willingness to embarrass herself seems a kind of romantic heroism. Also with Bernadette Peters, Julian Sands (as Liszt), Mandy Patinkin (as Musset), Emma Thompson, and Ralph Brown (as Delacroix). The costumes, by Jenny Beavan, are spectacular. —T.R. (5/6/91) (Village East Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

JEAN DE FLORETTE (1987)—The setting is Provence in the early nineteen-twenties. As the hunchback Jean de Florette, an educated, nature-loving city fellow who has learned about farming from books, Gérard Depardieu wears "GOOD MAN" in capital letters across his wide brow; in smaller letters we can read "He has poetry in his soul." Jean has a devoted wife (Elisabeth Depardieu), who used to sing in opera, and a delicate little daughter named Manon. And for slightly over two hours we watch him trudge across the land he has inherited hauling two barrels of water that are fastened across his hump. When there's no rain, his plants shrivel and his rabbits die, and it's agonizing for us, because we know that there's a spring of fresh mountain water on the land. His neighbors—the prosperous, greedy old peasant César Soubeyran (Yves Montand) and César's dull-witted nephew, Ugolin (Daniel Auteuil) —have hidden the spring under a load of cement, so that Jean will be forced to sell out to them. Adapted from the first volume of Marcel Pagnol's two-part novel "The Water of the Hills," published in 1963 (it was derived from a picture he made in 1952), "Jean de Florette" was followed by "Manon of the Spring." The director, Claude Berri, who did the adaptation with Gérard Brach, aimed for fidelity to the novel; he said that it was his task to give the material "a cinematic rhythm," but that "there was no need for imagination." That's what *he* thinks. The wide-screen cinematography is by Bruno Nuytten. In French.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; July 11-13.)

At the Public Theatre: (seated center) Guy Kibbee, Joan Blondell, and Hugh Herbert in "Dames"

JU DOU—It's been compared to James M. Cain, but the postman barely rings once in this tale of adultery Chinese style. In a small mountain village in the twenties, an impotent dye-mill owner (Li Wei), crazed over his lack of an heir, tortures his beautiful young bride (Gong Li). She seeks comfort in the arms of his worker nephew (Li Bao-Tian). There's no compelling plot, only the grinding inevitability of fate and tradition. The director, Zhang Yimou, simply metes out punishment to the lovers, the tyrant—and the audience. The lovers' son does most of the damage. He has the lethal power of the Children of the Damned—unfortunately, without the gimmicky zest of their eerie, glowing eyeballs. Zhang started out as a painter and still photographer. He remains one, devoting more attention to the dye mill's set design than to the story or the characters. The bolts of fabric are colored in subtle, vivid hues; the people are made out of whole cloth. In Mandarin.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

JUNGLE FEVER—The central event in Spike Lee's new movie is the love affair of Flipper (Wesley Snipes), a married African-American architect from Harlem, and Angie (Annabella Sciorra), an Italian-American office temp from Bensonhurst. Once Lee has set up the interracial relationship, he seems to lose interest in it; Flipper and Angie hold the stage only long enough to ignite the fears and hatreds of their communities, and when the fuse is lit their job is done. The movie's approach to its characters is stubbornly, and perversely, external; we never have the sense that we're getting inside anyone's skin (white or black). Everything in this picture is pitched at the level of public utterance. Lee's dialogue has the rhetorical tone of daytime-television talk shows; even in the most intense, emotionally charged domestic scenes, there's an alienating self-consciousness in the way the characters express themselves—they always look as if they had an ear cocked for audience response. This rhetorical barrage gives the picture a peculiar, halting rhythm: individual scenes have force and momentum, but the movie as a whole seems stalled, inert, uncertain where it's headed. And Lee's attitude toward interracial sex is shockingly puritanical; it's as if he were afraid that any hint of eroticism would constitute an endorsement of Flipper and Angie's affair. The scenes that deal with Flipper's crackhead brother, Gator (Samuel L. Jackson), have more energy than anything else in the picture; this subplot is tangential to the central theme, but it has some shape and dramatic coherence, and it actually builds to a climax. The interracial affair just dawdles to an underdramatized parting, and we feel nothing; emotionally, the movie has separated the lovers from each other, and from us, long before. Also with Lonette McKee, John Turturro, Anthony Quinn, Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, and Frank Vincent. The inventive cinematography is by Ernest Dickerson. Some fine new songs by Stevie Wonder grace the soundtrack.—T.R. (6/17/91) (Murray Hill Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and National Twin.)

THE MIRACLE—With Beverly D'Angelo and Donal McCann, directed by Neil Jordan. (Reviewed in this issue.) (68th St. Playhouse.)

ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THIEVES—A dull, dutiful trek through the legend of the bandit of Sherwood Forest, who stole from the rich and gave to the poor. Watching this picture is about as much fun as paying taxes, and far less stirring emotionally. We never feel that anyone involved in making this multimillion-dollar, two-hour-and-twenty-one-minute spectacle had any real affection for the story. The screenplay, by Pen Densham and John Watson, is a mishmash of halfhearted dramatizations of episodes from the legend and equally halfhearted nods to contemporary attitudes. If the movie had an exuberant spirit—as the 1938 "Adventures of Robin Hood," with Errol Flynn, had, in near-manic overabundance—we'd be more inclined to overlook the script's incoherence. But there's not much joy in evidence here. The direction, by Kevin Reynolds, is stolid and impersonal, and Kevin Costner seems miscast as Robin: he's not a forceful enough actor for this role. The merry men are an unmemorable lot; even Little John (Nick Brimble) and Friar Tuck (Michael McShane) don't make strong impressions, because they haven't been given anything interesting to do. (In this version, Little John *loses* his famous battle with Robin in the stream.) The audience seems to perk up only when Alan Rickman, as the villainous Sheriff of Nottingham, is on the screen. He gives a florid, theatrical performance—there's real glee in his malice. Also with Morgan Freeman, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Christian Slater, Michael Wincott, and Brian Blessed (who's so vivid in his brief scenes as Robin's father that we wish the movie were about him instead).—T.R. (7/1/91) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill Cinemas, Baronet, Coronet, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

THE ROCKETEER—Visually, this period adventure —about a daredevil pilot who finds a rocket pack that enables him to fly like Superman— is a creamy piece of kitsch. Its affectionate depiction of 1938 L.A. includes a goofy canine-shaped diner called the Bulldog Café and a glamorous Deco night spot. Jim Bissell's production design and Hiro Narita's cinematography bathe the sets and scenery in poster-art colors. But the lead characters and the story are too blandly, wholesomely retro. Bill Campbell is the all-American rocket man who ends up taking on the Nazis; Jennifer Connelly is his Hollywood-extra girlfriend—a far cry from the female lead in Dave Stevens' original comic-book feature. It's not hard for a droll group of character actors to steal the Rocketeer's thunder. The standouts are Alan Arkin as the hero's wise not-so-old engineer, Timothy Dalton as a Flynn-like swashbuckler (where was he when "Robin Hood" was cast?), and Terry O'Quinn as a sane Howard Hughes. Under Joe Johnston's clean, uninspired direction, the only set pieces that really take off are the

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Rocketeer's wild flights. They're more like the edgy joyrides in "The Right Stuff" than the computerized zigging and zagging we usually get from Industrial Light & Magic (who did the special effects).—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, 23rd St. West Triplex, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin; through July 11.)

SOAPDISH—The punchy, wisecracking love child of "Tootsie" and "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown." In the mad, mad, mad, mad world of daytime television, on- and off-screen soap operas collide, creating a series of explosions building to one big bang. With Sally Field as the American Sweetheart who turns into the Queen of Misery, Whoopi Goldberg as her best friend and head writer, Cathy Moriarty as her rival, Robert Downey, Jr., as her producer, and (best of all) Kevin Kline as her onetime lover and resurrected co-star, it's the kind of brash entertainment Hollywood isn't supposed to be able to make anymore—a whirling show-biz farce sped up for the era of instant infotainment. The characters have emotional-seepage problems: their competitive drives and backstage frustrations keep leaking into their jobs. Kline, in his most skillful and risible screen performance yet, has an additional dilemma—he can't locate any unrehearsed feelings. The movie's director, Michael Hoffman, brings out the jester in everyone; the editor, Garth Craven, cuts for maximum snap. And the screenwriters, Andrew Bergman and Robert Harling, wring fun out of fustian and keep the shallow characters on the run. Daytime TV is thought to be too easy to lampoon. But through a combination of lowdown parody and soapsmanship, Hoffman and company satirize the seemingly unsatirizable.—M.S. (Loews 19th Street East 6, Art Greenwich Twin, Loews Festival, and Loews Paramount. . . . ¶ Loews 34th Street Showplace; through July 9. . . . ¶ Quad Cinemas; starting July 12.)

THELMA & LOUISE—The heroines, played by Geena Davis (Thelma) and Susan Sarandon (Louise), are a couple of Arkansas women who set out for a weekend in the mountains and wind up speeding through the Southwest, on the run from the law. (Louise has murdered a man who tried to rape Thelma in a roadhouse parking lot.) The movie, written by Callie Khouri and directed by Ridley Scott, is designed to keep pushing the women farther and farther out there—past the point of no return, into the vanishing point of a vast Western landscape, and, finally, over the edge of the world. It's a pretty shameless outlaw fantasy; the feminist justification that the script provides for the heroines' behavior doesn't make their actions any less preposterous. But you can recognize the crudeness of the movie's narrative devices and still have an awfully good time. There's an exhilarating ease and intuitiveness in the way Davis and Sarandon work together, and the camera lingers on them as if it couldn't get enough of them. Scott's direction gives the story a pleasantly dreamy quality: when Thelma and Louise are on the road, the movie has the look of a mirage, a jewelled shimmer that keeps us half hypnotized. He turns Davis and Sarandon into outlaw princesses, and they're so vivid and likable that they carry us past the plot's most obvious contrivances; a little disbelief seems a small price to pay for being allowed to remain in their company.—T.R. (6/3/91) (Loews Village Theatre VII, and Cinema II. . . . ¶ Guild, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through July 9. . . . ¶ Murray Hill Cinemas; through July 11.)

TRULY, MADLY, DEEPLY—A lovely, original comedy about a young woman, named Nina (Juliet Stevenson), who is obsessed with the memory of her dead lover. The writer and director, Anthony Minghella, establishes an unusual, delicately varied mood, and the film moves gracefully from a realistic mode into a fantastic one. One night, Nina's lover, Jamie (Alan Rickman), reappears in her flat, and his presence seems perfectly natural to us: he has emerged from a setting that is already charged with the heroine's feelings for him. Once he's back, she has to confront, in the most concrete way, what it would really mean to live the rest of her life with a dead guy as her significant other: the movie is less a ghost story than a weird kind of domestic comedy. Minghella draws us into a fresh and startlingly humane vision of modern urban life; the details of the heroine's way of living always seem to point beyond themselves, and there's an emotional unity to everything we see. Minghella writes dialogue that sounds casual but somehow takes us straight to the heart of his work's larger concerns, and he directs the actors beautifully. Rickman is unexpectedly romantic here, and very funny besides. And Stevenson gives a radiant performance: she doesn't have a false moment, or a boring one, in the whole picture.—T.R. (5/6/91) (Quad Cinema, and Cinema 3.)

TRUTH OR DARE—Madonna was at her best on "Saturday Night Live," when she played herself for laughs as a pop temptress who puts out for her fans. But in this maddeningly prolonged, self-important, semi-documentary backstage look at her Blond Ambition tour, she plays not just for laughs but for shocks, tears, leers, and, most of all, for adoration. Her way of being truthful and daring is to allow the young director, Alek Keshishian, to depict her as a twenty-four-hour diva who mothers her backup performers and as a scantily clad Statue of Liberty standing up for free expression. The bits of her stage show (shot in 35-mm. color; the rest is in 16-mm. black-and-white) seem ludicrous when she describes them as part of "an emotional journey." The movie has been so over-reported that the celebrity bits with Warren Beatty, Kevin Costner, and Sandra Bernhard, and the friction among members of Madonna's biological and stage families, come off as the retold story. There's no jolt left to seeing Madonna do what you've already read about. The movie is all calculation, no revelation—unless you count the calculation itself as a revelation.—M.S. (Loews Village Theatre VII, Eastside Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

THE WARRIORS (1979)—Walter Hill's spectacle takes its story from Xenophon's "Anabasis" and its style from the taste of the modern urban dipossessed—in neon signs, graffiti, and the thrill of gaudiness. The film enters into the spirit of urban-male tribalism and the feelings of kids who believe that they own the streets because they keep other kids out of them. In this vision, cops and kids are all there is, and the worst crime is to be chicken. It has—in visual terms—the kind of impact that "Rock Around the Clock" had when it was played behind the titles of "Blackboard Jungle." It's like visual rock, and it's bursting with energy. The action runs from night until dawn, and most of it is in crisp, bright Day-Glo colors against the terrifying New York blackness; the figures stand out like a jukebox in a dark bar. There's a night-blooming, psychedelic shine to the whole baroque movie. Adapted from the Sol Yurick novel. With Michael Beck, Deborah Van Valkenburgh, David Patrick Kelly, David Harris, Dorsey Wright, James Remar, Thomas Waites, Roger Hill, and Marcelino Sanchez. Cinematography by Andrew Laszlo.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 16.)

WHAT ABOUT BOB?—As the character before the question mark—a multiphobic personality looking for a family—Bill Murray is touched not just with an armada of fears and tics but also with comic genius. Bob is a psychiatrist's nightmare, an achingly needy yet cunning patient, and Dr. Leo Marvin (Richard Dreyfuss) is the shrink he's currently haunting, a self-centered psychobabbler concerned with going on vacation and promoting his new book, "Baby Steps." Dreyfuss gives a shrewd, felicitous performance; he knows how to express a control freak's stroked ego with the merest quarter-smile. But the movie is shaped to redeem Bob and to give Leo his comeuppance, reducing Dreyfuss to shrieking fits. Tom Schulman's script (from a story by Alvin Sargent and Laura Ziskin) and Frank Oz's direction lack any sustained tone, including muscle tone. When Bob starts bonding with Leo's kids (Charlie Korsmo, Kathryn Erbe) and wife (Julie Hagerty), Murray's instinctive iconoclasm is all that keeps the film from going completely sentimental and flabby. The way Murray plays Bob, he embodies the ages of man—negatively. He can be alarmingly infantile and pathetically decrepit, and still be adept at getting what he wants. Underneath the gloss of good feeling, Murray conveys the selfishness within this basket case. Murray and Dreyfuss (and the final plot twist) manage to put across the essence of Bob and Leo's relationship: a clash of egomaniacs.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Gramercy, Cinema I, and Olympia.)

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

THE decision of Justice Thurgood Marshall to step down from the Supreme Court left President Bush with an unusually significant vacancy to fill. Justice Marshall, eighty-three years old and in failing health, isn't merely the first and only black Supreme Court Justice. A great-grandson of slaves, he has been a tireless defender of civil rights and individual liberties. But of late he has made no secret of his frustration with the changing climate of the Court. "We're not gaining ground, my friends," he said recently at a meeting of black civil-rights leaders. "We might be losing."

An examination of the federal judiciary suggests some of the reasons for Marshall's frustration. More than half of that judiciary has now been appointed either by Ronald Reagan or by George Bush, and when the vacancy left by Justice Marshall's resignation is filled a majority of the Supreme Court justices will have been appointed by these two Presidents. The Court, which has greatly increased its influence on domestic policies in the last thirty years, has begun to "gouge precedent," to quote Marshall, and is sending "a clear signal that scores of established Constitutional liberties are now ripe for reconsideration." In the process, the Court has been constructing new legal precedents, which will last much longer than the policies of the Presidents who have created it. For President Bush, this is the perfect moment to make a special place for himself in the history books: with the nomination of Clarence Thomas, a black United States Circuit Court of Appeals judge in Washington, D.C., he is poised to establish a solidly conservative majority on the bench and to put his stamp on a Court that will affect our lives for decades.

However, this nomination has also put Mr. Bush on the spot. Because of who Justice Marshall is, and because of the positions he has taken in his quarter century on the Court, the selection of his replacement was necessarily a public-relations hurdle for the President. He has often spoken, however vaguely, of his commitment to advancing civil rights, but his actions have often seemed regressive. His has been an Administration unable or unwilling to compromise with a divided Congress, and his characteristic method of dealing with domestic issues has been to criticize others for his own inaction.

With the nomination of Judge Thomas, though, this "spin control" method of government has only exposed the faults in leadership it was designed to conceal. For one thing, Judge Thomas's brief judicial career is, like the career of Justice David Souter, notable chiefly for its lack of a "paper trail" and for stands not taken: stands on abortion, obscenity, the division of church and state, and the like. The President's choice seems to have been made partly to avoid a candidate who would provide any grounds for specific criticism. The nomination is also an attempt by the President to have things both ways when it comes to the "quota" issue. On the one hand, he has evidently sought—by selecting a black—to ward off complaints about the loss of a minority member on the Court, while, on the other hand, he has chosen someone whose stand against quotas and affirmative action is even stronger than his own. (In a letter to the *Wall Street Journal* in 1987 Judge Thomas deplored "race-conscious devices" that "only further and deepen the original problem.") It's likely that none of the groups the President is trying to please will be satisfied, since fulfilling the expectations raised by this vacancy on the Court requires more than public relations. That Judge Thomas is black is surely no guarantee that he will follow in the footsteps of Justice Marshall; that he is conservative may be no consolation to people who think that the President has created a "black seat" on the Court by nominating him.

Regardless of Judge Thomas's race, the goals achieved by his nomination are very different from those attained by Lyndon Johnson when he nominated Thurgood Marshall, then the Solicitor General, in 1967. Many people have questioned whether Johnson was truly committed to civil rights, but his choice of Marshall unambiguously furthered those rights. As counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Marshall had argued successfully before the Su-

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preme Court twenty-nine times—most notably in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the landmark 1954 school-desegregation case. He was equipped with a keen sense of the practical consequences of civil law, and, as a lawyer and a "colored person," he understood the particular power that the Court has in the matter of preserving and extending civil rights. Though overt acts of racial discrimination have diminished in this country, Marshall's practical sense has remained keen. In January, he was once again forced to point out in a dissenting opinion "the unique harm associated with a system of racially identifiable schools"—words that he could have written half a century ago. "People say we're better off," Marshall said this spring, "but better off than what?"

Justice Marshall's influence on the Court extends well beyond desegregation and affirmative action—into the area of civil liberties. Here, too, he and his fellow-liberals have been losing ground; one example is the Court's ruling this term that the use of a coerced confession as evidence does not automatically invalidate a conviction. Justice Marshall has been a strong voice for the rights of criminals and prisoners, for a right to privacy, and against the death penalty. In its recent terms, the Court has broadened the authority of law officers to search people and their possessions without first obtaining a warrant, and has made it harder for victims of job discrimination to seek legal remedy; it has also ruled that certain appeals for death-row inmates and other state prisoners can be limited. In all these cases, Marshall dissented, and on the day he resigned he showed his discouragement at seeing the erosion of his legacy when he wrote, "Power, not reason, is the new currency of this Court's decision-making."

It may be fitting that Justice Marshall, the champion of the powerless, is stepping down now. When he wrote, in 1971, that "convenience and political considerations of the moment do not justify a basic departure from the principles of our system of government," he was writing about an attempt by the executive branch to arrogate power not granted by the Constitution. A different sort of departure is taking place today, as both the legislative and the executive branches are unable to pay attention to anything other than the political aspects of the word "quota" in attempting to safeguard civil rights, and as the increasingly powerful judicial branch appears to be—as Justice Stevens put it, in a dissent joined by Marshall—caving in to "the hydraulic pressure of public opinion." With Justice Marshall's resignation, an important symbol of this country's achievements in civil rights has been lost and an influential voice in their favor stilled. When the Justice was asked what the Court should do after his resignation, he said, "Try to get along without me." The Court may fare better than the rest of us.

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The Traveler

BEFORE Martin Doyle got into his present line of work, he tried a few other occupations, among them farming, logging, construction, managing a motel, driving a truck, running a convenience store, and selling plants door-to-door. In 1969, a friend who had bought a restaurant near Interstate 84 in Union, Connecticut, and was having a rough go of it asked him to help out. "I came planning to stay a year," Mr. Doyle said the other day, sipping a beer on the rocks while seated in a booth at the Traveler Restaurant, on a service road a quarter of a mile off Exit 74. "I've been here twenty-two years. I've owned the place for twenty-one." The Traveler features a menu that from the perspective of a self-interested turkey would probably seem turkey-heavy. It lists a New England turkey dinner, a turkey potpie, a sliced-turkey sandwich, a hot turkey sandwich, and a turkey club sandwich, and it includes this advisory: "Native turkeys cooked here 7 tons yearly." Otherwise, it is a basic family restaurant, which serves basic family-restaurant fare: burgers and sandwiches; unfancy entrées that come with bread and a vegetable; a sixteen-ounce T-bone "Hungry Man's Special"; and, for dessert, pie, ice cream, pudding, and Jell-O.

Owning and managing the Traveler keeps Mr. Doyle busy but doesn't deprive him of his two favorite pastimes: gambling ("For recreation, I go to Vegas three or four times a year") and books ("I'm an avid reader"). Growing up on a farm in western Massachusetts during the Depression, he became familiar with households where the only books were a Bible and a dictionary. "Someone who had maybe thirty books—that was a library," he said. "We had a berry farm—strawberries, blueberries—and a few horses, chickens, and pigs. I only went to school through seventh grade, but I always read. I read pulp magazines—Doc Savage, The Shadow. I read Tom Swift, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Horatio Alger, Max Brand, and Zane Grey. As I got older, a librarian in my town told me to stop reading Max Brand and Zane Grey and to start reading Ernest Haycox. She told me to read fairy tales. When I was supposed to be doing my chores, I'd be hiding out in the barn with a book. My father would complain that because I wasn't paying attention the cows got loose. I caught more hell for reading than for anything else I've ever done."

Mr. Doyle, who is sixty-eight years old and not long ago became a great-grandfather, lives behind the restaurant, in a pine split-level that has been painted barn red. Six and a half years ago, when he began to sense that his collection of books was crowding him out of the house, he moved a few thousand of them to the restaurant and posted a sign that said "Free books. Help yourself." What he had in mind was a library where every volume that went out the door would be on permanent loan. It was a first-come, first-served arrangement; if you got there too late to grab "Celebration," by Harvey Swados, or "Life Its Ownself," by Dan Jenkins, you could still walk off with a copy of "Learning to Drive: A Practical Approach," by John Stevenson, or "Careers and Opportunities in Electronics," by John M. Carroll. "When I started giving away books, less than fifty per cent of the people took them," he said. "They wanted to know 'What's the gimmick?' If they wanted a second book, that would cost them twenty-five cents. But if they wanted one free one, they could have that even if they were just using the facilities. A lot of people stop here just for that, but they can have a book. What the hell." The percentage of customers who now take advantage of the Traveler's free-book offer is, by Mr. Doyle's estimate, closer

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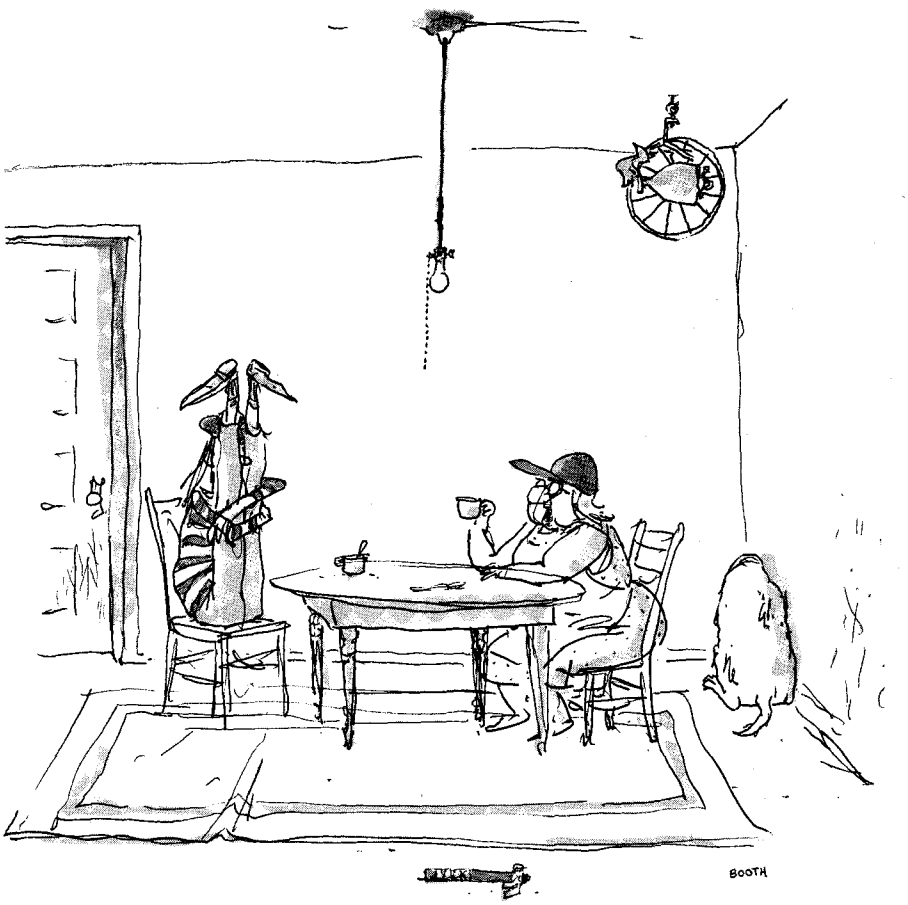
to ninety-five. "I don't believe there are as many illiterate people as I keep hearing there are," he said. "We give away almost a hundred thousand books a year."

To maintain a steady supply, he scouts large collections of unrare books wherever and whenever they turn up around New England—fifteen thousand in Fall River, twelve thousand in Framingham, thirty thousand on Cape Cod. A few days before our visit, he and a crew of helpers drove to Manchester, New Hampshire, where a minister who had collected seventy thousand books and had put them on sale to raise money to send Bibles to Germany was letting Mr. Doyle have the leftovers—thirty-five thousand volumes, sight unseen, for five hundred dollars.

"We knew the price was right, but the trip turned out to be a pain," Mr. Doyle said. "On the way up, one of our trucks made a wrong turn and got lost for a while in Boston. When we got to the place where the books were stored, it took us more than an hour to get at them. It was a U-Haul storage facility, and the couple who ran it didn't seem to like having us around. We couldn't even get into the storage locker, because the minister was in the hospital and his wife didn't have the key. She came up with a hacksaw, but the lock was hardened steel, so the hacksaw was useless—we had to rent a bolt cutter. We finally got the storage locker open, and it was like Fibber McGee's closet—eight to ten feet high in loose books. We looked at maybe twenty-five thousand books at that first stop and then went to another location, to look at what was supposed to be ten thousand more inside a tractor-trailer. But when we got there it was just fifteen or twenty boxes of books. The rest was clothing—discarded clothing, like for the Salvation Army. There were supposed to be more books in the front end of the trailer. I was trying to get to them, and as I was crawling over these rags Christopher Santucci, one of my restaurant managers, says, 'I think something's moving in there.' A lot of the books were textbooks—just useless stuff. You know, statistics, or why the grass grows wild in Wyoming. Some people think just because a book is free you can give it away."

When the Traveler's free-book policy had been in effect for six months or so,



"Leon, do you think it's all psychological?"

• •

Mr. Doyle noticed that, in addition to certain books that seemed ideal for giving away and certain books that nobody seemed to want, he had acquired a lot of books that seemed too valuable to give away. He placed an ad in a weekly newspaper saying "Book Lover Wanted." A former librarian named Kathy Lisiewski responded, and pretty soon the Traveler had a bookstore downstairs, with Ms. Lisiewski in charge. The restaurant, which can accommodate a hundred and twenty customers, has Shaker-style chairs, a slate floor, and Masonite-panelled walls, and the walls are decorated with inscribed photographs of celebrated authors who have responded positively when Ms. Lisiewski wrote and invited them to be inducted into the Traveler's "Rogues Gallery of Writers." Framed and hung beside each photograph is a combined biographical sketch and bibliography prepared by Ms. Lisiewski, together with any correspondence she may have received from the honoree.

Patrons of the Traveler are able to enjoy their meals in the company of glossy head shots of Isaac Asimov, Jackie Collins, Stephen King, John Updike, Alex Haley, Mary Higgins Clark, Erma Bombeck, and Beverly Cleary, who inscribed her portrait "Happy Reading with Your Hotcakes." Those incorrigible rogues Dr. Spock, Dr. Seuss, Dr. Wayne Dyer, Dr. Ruth Westheimer, and Dr. Leo Buscaglia are also part of the décor. What Mr. Doyle regards as the best table in the house is one near a big picture window that affords a bucolic view of Mashapaug Pond and birches, white pines, and hemlocks growing on its shores. On the wall above the table are inscribed photographs of George Plimpton, Robert Ludlum, and Robin Moore. For some time now, Robin Moore has been Mr. Doyle's favorite writer. He esteems such masterworks as "The French Connection" and "The Green Berets"—as well as "The Happy Hooker," on which Robin Moore collaborated with Xaviera Hollander—and he has been deeply impressed that Mr. Moore has stopped by the Traveler a number of times and has proved to be a witty

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conversationalist and an excellent drinking companion.

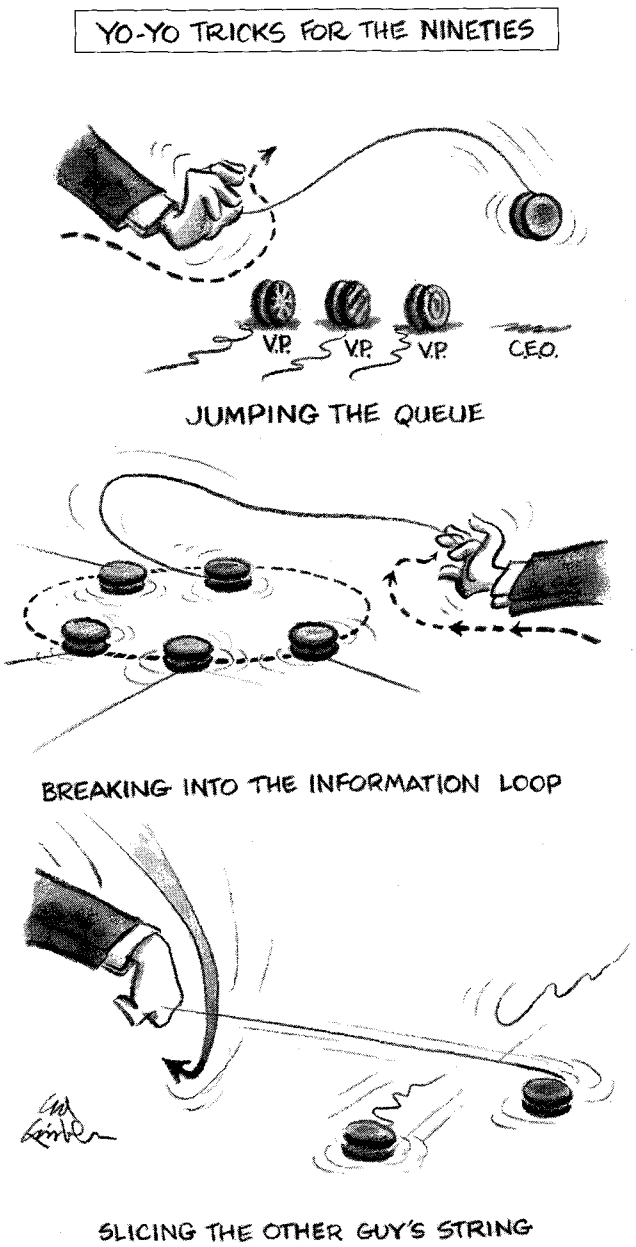
Mr. Doyle led us through the kitchen and out to a barn where he had stored and was slowly sorting through the hauls from several recent book runs. "The bulk of people are looking for fiction in free books," he said. "They're looking for a story." What they were not looking for, he added, was the contents of a carton of books that had come from the foray into Manchester. Its titles included "Proceedings First World Recreations Congress October 1-7, 1964," "U.S. in a Nutshell," "How Managers Make Things Happen," "Papal Pronouncements on the Political Order," "Scientific Analysis on the Pocket Calculator," and "Serving the Small Community: The Story of United Community Defense Services."

"This is what frustrates me," Mr. Doyle said. "Thirty per cent of these books from New Hampshire are going in the dumpster. This is book hell." He paused, as if embarrassed by this sentiment. "I've noticed I can't get lost in books the way I used to. People ask me if I read more because I handle so many books. I *look at* more books, but you can't get as engrossed when you're sorting books. If you start reading, you get in trouble."

Any books not destined for the dumpster were being repacked in sturdy cardboard boxes that had originally contained turkeys. "Our turkeys run thirty-five or forty pounds apiece," he said. "Each one of these turkey cartons will hold almost forty books."

Back in the restaurant, Mr. Doyle introduced us to Ms. Lisiewski, who explained her bookselling philosophy concisely. "There's a book for every person and a person for every book," she said. "And eventually they get together—either upstairs or downstairs." She works in the bookstore four days a week, volunteers at her town's public library every Thursday, and likes to visit flea markets on Sundays to look for books. She has organized some twenty thousand volumes in the Traveler bookstore into more than a hundred different categories, including one of books with titles that especially appeal to her, such as "How to Keep Out of Trouble," "A Short History of Human Stupidity," "Our Dumb Pets," "How to Get Rid of a Woman," and "Never Work for a Jerk!" Her area of specialization as a reader is psychopathology. "I don't like psychopaths personally," she said, "but they're so fascinating."

She asked Mr. Doyle whether he had shown us "the mess out back, where the food and books compete." He guided us to a storage room lined with shelves, half of which were filled with bulk staples: GravyMaster, spaghetti, vegetable oil, flour, canned tomatoes, ketchup. The other half were filled with paperback fiction, hardcover religious exegesis, and Silhouette romances (which sell for ten dollars a bag containing between eighty and a hundred books). "Baked beans and mayonnaise and tartar sauce and books and whatever," Mr. Doyle said. "Lots of combinations."



Three-Dimensional

ONE of the things the new Steve Urkel doll says when you pull its voice cord is "Got any cheese?" We don't know why he says this, because we are among the few Americans who don't watch "Family Matters," the allegedly warm, wonderful, hilarious television comedy featuring a character named Steve Urkel, who evidently spends a great deal of his time inquiring about cheese. One of the things that Wayne Charness, a vice-president of Hasbro, Inc., says about the introduction of the Steve Urkel doll is "I hope you're as excited as we are!" In this case, we know why *he* says *this*. "Family Matters" delivers the highest share of viewers aged two to eleven among all prime-time network programs, and this means that the Steve Urkel doll, which Hasbro will be bringing out this fall, is bound to be a very high-margin piece of entertainment hardware.

At a press conference at the New York Hilton the other day, we found out pretty much everything else about Steve Urkel and the official Urkel product line that we had been wondering about. We had been wondering, for instance, how the whole Urkel licensing campaign had been going. A representative of LCA Entertainment, the licensing company orchestrating the Urkel licensing campaign, was sitting behind us at the conference, and he provided this interpretative account: "For one thing, the apparel is blowing off the shelves. I mean *blowing off*. The boxer shorts are really hot. And the sheets, by the way, are incredible." The people at LCA also wanted to

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mention this: If you yourself do not have a wild and wondrous neighbor like Steve Urkel, you will soon be able to make up for it by purchasing Urkel sweatshirts, T-shirts, twill jackets (screen-printed), belts, suspenders, pajamas, robes, sweaters, fleece coördinates in boys' sizes 2 to 18, sleeping bags, backpacks, beach towels, bedding, trading cards, posters, hand-held electronic games, video-game watches, tabletop games, buttons, Lucite key rings, mini-stickers, poster books, calendars, jigsaw puzzles, 3-D reels, and Do the Urkel: The Risk and Roll Game That Lets You Be Urkel, not to mention the amazingly lifelike Steve Urkel doll.

Jaleel White is the fourteen-year-old actor who plays Steve Urkel. Like the Steve Urkel doll, Jaleel has big brown eyes, gigantic dimples, a pointy chin, and a sprightly body with rubbery joints. In character, he wears a nerdy shirt, nerdy pants, nerdy shoes, suspenders, and oversized eyeglasses on a nylon cord. In real life, he wears other outfits. Jaleel had this to say about becoming a doll: "A lot of very important people of our time have been dolls." At the press conference, Jaleel made a short speech in the nerdy voice he uses for Urkel, embraced an Urkel doll, and demonstrated the Urkel dance to the adoring overflow crowd. (We have misplaced the dance instructions that were in the press kit, but we seem to remember that they began with the phrase "Hitch up your pants.") Then Jaleel was introduced to Roseann Radosevich, a director of girls'-toys design at Hasbro, who supervised the development of the doll. "He skewed a little older than preschool," Ms. Radosevich explained to us after the encounter, because we had, in fact, been wondering how Urkel skewed. And how about his adorability quotient? "He's very, very three-dimensional," Ms. Radosevich said. "It's easy to see how he could be a toy."

Here's something else we'd been wondering about: What do seventeen eager press photographers say to a living doll? This much we could make out: "Jaleel, can you shuffle a little again?" and "Hey, Jaleel, redo the Urkel dance!" and "Jaleel, do the Urkel!" and "Jaleel, over here, babe!" and "This way, Jaleel." Also, "Do the thing with your foot up, babe." Jaleel's reaction to the hubbub: "I've been in the business since I was three years old. I know how to communicate with the press. I've grown into the press. Also, I've been on Carson." And how about describing his approach, as an actor, to the Urkel character? "To be honest, it was destiny."

"I'd like to point out that our cars lead the field in declining auto sales."

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Basically, a press conference announcing the introduction of a multimillion-dollar product line involves a small hotel room filled with a lot of people in good moods about their upside potential answering questions from other people about that upside potential. This was the case with Urkel: The Press Conference. Someone from *Teen Beat* wanted to know whether the Urkel doll was likely to be bigger than the New Kids on the Block products, and whether Urkel was a multidimensional sort of thing, and what Jaleel's dream date would be like. (We were wondering about the last item, too. She would be—this is direct from the source—"not a shallow person, who has ambition, and who would not be ashamed to ride around in a car that wasn't a Mercedes-Benz.") Iris Burton, Jaleel's agent, wanted to know if she sounded too nasal in her interview. A reporter from Long Island wanted to know how long Urkelmania was likely to last. Grace Garland, the gossip reporter from WBLS Radio, wanted to know if Jaleel's father, a dentist who lives in Los Angeles, had done Jaleel's teeth. Someone sitting beside us wanted to know if we had ever eaten fried dough. A reporter from a Philadelphia television station wanted to know if Jaleel had heard the rumor that he was more intelligent than all five New Kids on the Block put together. Someone without a name tag wanted to know whether a comparison between Jaleel and the young Jerry Lewis had been made before. We wanted to know how we should feel about getting a press release saying "Urkel-mania Takes the Country by Storm," considering that until the press conference we had never heard of Steve Urkel. Grace Garland, when she had finished complimenting Jaleel's teeth, wanted to know if we wanted one of her business cards, just because, as she put it, "you never know."

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LATE EARLY MAN

"I WAS talking to your girlfriend this morning," announces Anita, speaking from the carpeted floor of our editing suite, where she's sprawled like a stranded whale, her head cushioned by a coil of video cables, her silky blue harem pants pulled up above her knees. She's buffing her face with an ice cube as though taking a gravestone rubbing. After lunch she lost the ability to sit up in a chair, and I had to take over at the controls. Our suite contains the only air-conditioner in all of Paradise Productions, and it broke down last night, and this is the two-week stretch of hell we go through every summer in Boston, when you can't buy an air-conditioner no matter how much money you're willing to spend. The hardware commando, Marco Tempesto, was supposed to come over and fix the one we have, but apparently he's too busy building one of his lasers, or simulating reality on a computer somewhere. "She was telling me she wants you to do this to her," Anita says.

I twiddle a knob on the console to stop the videotape. "Wants me to do *what*?"

"You know. Knock her up. Make her pregnant. I'm supposed to plant that suggestion in your mind."

Anita has been with child now for as long as anyone can remember. The baby was due a week ago, and there's still no sign it plans to throw in the towel and come out. Everybody in the office lost the birth-date lottery; we had to make new guesses and put them in the hat all over again.

"Rebecca told you that?" I say. "When?"

"This morning. She was leaving for work when I came in. You were in the shower."

"And she said she wanted me to knock her up."

"Yup."

I have to say, this amazes me. Rebecca and I had a terrible fight this morning before I got in the shower. She was gone when I got out. We fight all the time, and later I can never remember what the fights were about. Rebecca makes documentary films for a station in town, and she stays with me here half the time. I sublet the apartment downstairs—that's how I came to work at Paradise Productions. It's how I met Rebecca, too. She and Anita go back a long way. Anita fixed us up.

"Can I give you some advice?" Anita says. "Do it so she has the kid in the spring. Everybody told me, 'Anita, whatever you do, don't be pregnant in the summertime.' That was the one thing I was supposed to remember. So what do I go and do?" She raises herself up on one elbow. "In fact, right now would be the perfect time."

"Anita? Didn't you kind of get pregnant by accident?"

"Walter!" she cries. "We always thought we might have a baby someday. Maybe, anyway. It crossed our minds. Don't call my baby an accident!"

"I just meant you're not really the family-planning type, you and Dwight."

"No, you're right. We're more the walk-off-the-edge-of-a-cliff type." She selects a new ice cube from the bucket and burnishes her face some more. Then she stops, lapsing into reflection. "Do you think that's a problem?"

"Me? No. I have a lot of respect for people who walk off cliffs."

"You're nice, Walter," she says, *continuing with the ice.* "I'm glad we found you. Now what's going on up there? You're not telling me anything."

"Benny's molecules are attacking the other molecules. Benny's are winning."

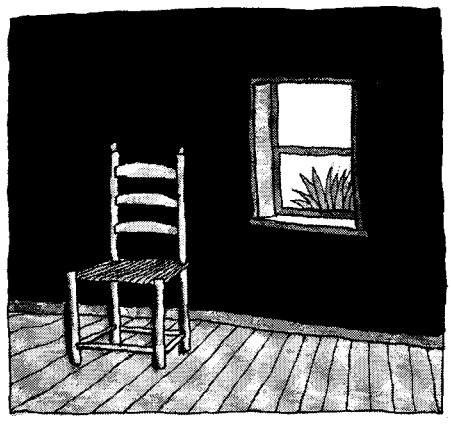
"Oh, good. We're up to the molecules. What's after that?"

"The scientist comes on and starts talking."

"Right. Stop it there," she says. "Let's think this through. We have the nice molecules. Why do we need a scientist talking about them?"

"Because Benny said we have to?"

"Yeah, but that can't be the reason. Scientists are boring. People turn off when they see scientists. No offense."



"What do you mean 'no offense'? I'm not a scientist."

"But maybe you played a scientist once. Like the guy in that commercial who says, 'I'm not a doctor, but I play one on TV.' "

"I've never played a scientist."

"Well, forget it then," she says. "What am I apologizing to you for?"

"I think we should crowbar the scientist in. Benny wants him."

"I know, I know," she sighs, rearranging herself on the floor and resting her arms on top of the medicine ball her belly has become. "Don't you sometimes wish Benny never found his niche in life?" Then she starts to giggle, but that jostles the baby too much. "Ow. It always kicks me when I laugh. It hates it when I'm happy."

Benny is Benjamin Silk, our client. Anita and Dwight are actually fond of Benny, partly because he's one of their best accounts, but also because he sees reality the way they do, as a collection of bites—verbal ones in Benny's case, the maxims and mottoes by which he orders the world. "Niche in life" is one of his favorites. He found his, and now *everybody else had better find theirs.* Me in particular. Benny sees me up here, an out-of-work actor writing video scripts, and he pegs me for a guy wandering through life in his boxer shorts, trying to remember what he did with his niche. He would like to save me from this fate. But that's the problem: I think niches are fate. Consider the unlikely people who manage to rendezvous with their niche. I've known a carpenter named Tilt and a tree surgeon named Wilde. Rebecca goes to a dentist named Payne. Once I was stopped by a State Trooper named Officer Crook.

And then there's Benny Silk himself. The first time I encountered him I thought he was the most abrasive person I'd ever met. Then I found out his line of work: abrasives. Benny's the marketing director for an abrasives manufacturer. If it can scrape the surface off an object, if it can grind something down to a nub, if it can scour, sand, buff, or polish to a deep lustre, Benny's company makes it. But he wasn't always in abrasives. He's done laminates and films, adhesives and coatings. Did a long stretch in lubrication. They all had their re-

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wards, but they weren't his niche. Then Benny entered the realm of grit and found himself. He became an abrasives evangelist. "You gotta be rough to be smooth, son," he barked at me the moment we met, apropos of nothing except perhaps my scratchy chapped hand crushed in his lotion-soft one.

Anita and I have been editing Benny's latest project—an infomercial about a fabulous new line of synthetic sandpaper—for two weeks now, twice the editing time prescribed in the budget, and it's still lying there dead. We can't figure out how to jolt it into life. The sandpaper in question is called Veritas Grit—christened by one of Benny's young marketeers from the Harvard Business School. Benny couldn't be more proud of this new stuff if it came from inside his own body, but he knows he's got a hard sell on his hands. Our tape claims that Veritas Grit works as well on metal as on wood, works even better on plastic, works wet or dry, and lasts longer than the competition's best stuff. The problem is it costs about twice as much. People will see the price in the store and go for the other brand. We have to convince them. To this end we've cut in testimonials from users in the field, official company demos, Tempesto's computer-animated molecules. Today, we spent the morning playing with the idea that Veritas Grit is "the premium sandpaper" before we finally dropped that out of shame. Still, Benny wants some compelling something, and whenever clients want something and don't know what it is, they go with an authority figure. Benny has forbidden us to remove this scientist.

DWIGHT lurches in, a skinny six-foot-six-inch man in a red T-shirt with a yellow peace symbol on the front, sharkskin slacks, low-slung tasselled loafers, translucent green nylon socks. "How's that old rough cut?" he says. "Getting it smoothed out?"

"It's beginning to grate on us," I say.

"Rubbing you wrong?" says Dwight, smiling brightly and joining Anita on the floor. "Going against your grain? Taking the edge off?"

"Dwight," I say, "do you notice anything about this room?"

He tumbles one of Anita's ice cubes in his mouth for a minute as though polishing a jewel. "Hot in here," he says around the ice.

"We can't work under these conditions, Dwight. Look at poor Anita."

"I told Anita she should be home, where it's cool," Dwight says, patting her head. "But she's a big girl. She wants to work."

Alongside Dwight's bony frame, Anita seems to have doubled in size in the heat, like bread dough. "I just want to wrap this tape," she says to the ceiling. "I just want to finish this project and go have my baby. And I can. I can. I just have to do it lying down, without moving."

"Dwight, you have to get Tempesto over here to fix this air-conditioner," I say.

"Not possible, Walter. Tempesto's working on something else for me right now. Very important."

"More important than finishing this wretched tape?"

"As a matter of fact, that's what he is working on. I've enlisted his help."

"I thought we were doing that for laughs," Anita says. "You can't put that in this tape, Dwight."

"I think it's just what this tape needs," Dwight says. "We need to show Benny's sandpaper in action. Show people the power of Veritas Grit!"

"Benny'll never go for it," Anita says.

"Anita, don't say that. We haven't even pitched it to him yet."

"Pitched what?" I say.

"What are you doing tonight, Walter?"

"Busy. Tied up."

"With Rebecca? She's invited."

"To what?"

"I already told her about it," Anita says. "She thinks it's stupid."

The intercom beeps, and Susie's transistorized voice issues forth from the speaker. Susie is our new Korean receptionist, discovered by Dwight in the corner store just days after her family arrived in the States. "Dwight, Tempasta on two," Susie says. "Tempasta for Dwight."

"Speak of the devil," Dwight says.

I dive for the phone and punch Line 2. "Tempesto, we're being roasted alive! You're torturing a pregnant woman! Get over here right now!"

Then Dwight and I wrestle for the phone. He wins, because my hands are too sweaty to hold on. "What's up?" he asks Tempesto.

"Fix our air-conditioner, you bum!" Anita calls out.

"What happened?" Dwight says. "Again? For God's sake, Tempesto. Do they have our stuff? Great. O.K., I'll grab Walter and we'll be right over."

"No! You can't take Walter!" Anita

"Still, Edgar, you were loyal longer than most, and I'd like to thank you for that."

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cries, waving her arms like an overturned crab.

Dwight hits the intercom button. "Susie to Editing Suite B," he says. "Suite B calling Miss Susie."

"Where is Tempesto, anyway?" I ask.

"Encountering some difficulties," Dwight says, fanning Anita with a folded Boston *Globe*. "Anita, you're my pregnant wife. I don't want you to be unhappy."

"Then go work on your own project and leave us alone!"

"I finished my project. I came in around three and wrapped that one up."

"How can you work with no sleep like that?" I say.

"That's when I'm at my best, Walter. If I'm well rested I think too much. You can really screw yourself up, thinking."

Susie appears in our doorway in a state of excited wonder, her arms and eyelids fluttering like hovering birds. I can never decide if Susie grasps the strangeness of her fate or if she thinks crazy video people await every girl who comes to America.

"Susie," Dwight says. "Anita's very uncomfortable."

"Too hot for mothership!" Susie says, waving at her own perspiring throat.

Dwight takes a clump of bills from his pants and extracts a couple of twenties. "Take the rest of the afternoon off, Susie. Take Anita to a nice air-conditioned movie. Eat ice cream."

"Tank you, Dwight!" Susie says.

"It's air-conditioned at home," Anita says. "We could rent 'Rosemary's Baby.' Or maybe 'The Exorcist.' "

"I like romantic," says Susie, following us to the door. "Tempasta have many kidnapping!" she adds.

"Kidnapped?" I say. "Again?"

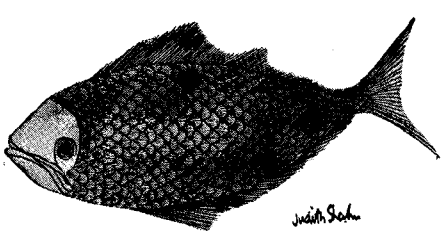
THE radio in Dwight's air-conditioned 1964 Bonneville says that joggers shouldn't be jogging today—it's ninety-eight degrees with an air inversion trapping car exhaust like a humidor—but as we cross Storrow Drive they're out in normal numbers, running in place as they wait for the light, poised to inject themselves into Boston's jugular vein. They look like tropical fish schooling outside our windows in their colorful shorts and shoes, gasping for air. Dwight is talking to Benny Silk on his car phone, taking the sports-fishing approach to client management—paying out some line, letting Benny run a little. "You're absolutely right, Benny," he's saying into the phone. "Yup, yup, I couldn't agree more." We cross the river and take Memorial Drive, past the Harvard sunbathers on the banks of the Charles, and by the time we're turning on to River Street toward Central Square Dwight is reeling Benny in: he will meet us after work at an industrial building in Somerville, next to Route 93, where Dwight will unveil his secret weapon of sandpaper salesmanship. Then Dwight hangs up.

"Can I make a call on that?" I say. "I've never talked to anybody on a car phone."

"What are you, early man? I'm riding in a car with early man?"

I call Rebecca at work. "Guess where I am," I say.

"I called Paradise before," she says.



"They wouldn't put me through."

"Anita made Susie hold our calls. Because of the crunch we're in."

"Then I left a message on your machine downstairs."

"We didn't have time to stop there. We're going to rescue Tempesto."

"Where are you?"

"Driving down River Street."

"I hate that. Why do people have to talk on the phone in their cars?"

"Would you like to ask Dwight? It's his phone."

"I'm mad at Dwight. That's what I was calling about. I ran into Anita this morning. Everybody knows she's a nut, but what's his excuse?"

"For what?"

"For letting her work in her condition, and then taking her to this hippy dippy thing tonight."

"Hippy dippy?"

"You don't think an electric-belt-sander race is hippy dippy? Maybe the Merry Pranksters'll be there. Maybe we'll all drink some electric Kool-Aid."

"I've been wanting to get a new outlook on things."

"I'd like a man with all his chromosomes. And when I'm a week over-

DROWNING IN GRAIN

Take silos. Full of the innocent fruit
of the plain, waiting. Quiet malice

in kernels that just can't help acting
in concert, loads of golden weight ticking

through the intake into the bin, burying a boy
or two. After all, we're all just numbers,

they seem to say, evenly, every pale face
a coin representing something hardly

irreplaceable. Nothing's rare in their whisper: you,
for instance, who think you've seen me

here before. You're satisfied that what
you don't hear yet

is silence. But all these dreamy
associations are busy drying out, the sugar

crystallizing into pure carbohydrate: light,
but liable to shift come morning

when the unsuspecting inspector arrives
to check the corn.

—CAROLINE FRASER

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due you better not pull stuff like this on me."

"We're having a baby?"

"I meant if we ever did."

"This is the first I've heard about it."

"I've tried to bring it up plenty of times."

"Not that I can remember."

"I've alluded to it. I've made suggestions. A man who was somewhere besides on Mars would have taken the hint."

"She's mad at both of us," I tell Dwight, holding out the phone. He does resemble Timothy Leary, now that I look at him behind the wheel, the worn-down buildings of Cambridge going by in the background. "Belt-sander races, huh, Dwight? Fascinating."

"I was planning to tell you," he says to me, and then, into the phone, he says, "I can see being mad at *him*, but what did I do?" Then he gets a good long tongue-lashing. "She insists on working, Rebecca," he finally gets in. "I want her to stay home. I am not a slave driver. It's her tape. She's the producer. I'm the executive producer. You went to college with her, you know how she is. I need Walter there tonight. Our client has taken a liking to him. You're coming, right? I was counting on you to bring Anita. You'll love it. Tempesto? He's being held for ransom. Yup, again. Don't ask me. O.K. Bye."

He hangs up and says, "Are you and Rebecca getting along all right, Walter?"

"I don't know, Dwight. I'm drama. She's documentary. It's a constant struggle."

"I figured you were the real problem. She said I was a negligent husband, a rotten father, and an example of the Peter Pan syndrome. That just doesn't fit."

"Well, you have to admit, Dwight. Belt-sander races. It looks pretty bad."

"Walter. Not you, too. You don't trust me."

"You don't tell me anything."

"You know Veritas Grit is a big deal for Benny's company."

"Right, I know that."

"I'm sure it's great sandpaper and everything, but sandpaper's sandpaper, don't you think? You know the real reason it's such a big deal?"

"This must be the part you didn't tell me."

"Because the guy who named it Veritas Grit is the son of one of the company wigs. Fresh out of B-school, doesn't know a thing, but before long he'll be Benny's boss. He's hot to make his mark. He wants a video people won't forget when they see it at trade shows. He wants a spot for cable that'll be like MTV for the abrasives world. He's talking about taking this account to an ad agency."

"The ambitious little snot!"

"Right. I tell Benny we can do all this for a fraction of the price, but it's not gonna be Benny's call. The wig's son is gonna call it. Veritas Grit's his baby. I'm giving birth to a human being, this guy's giving birth to a piece of sandpaper. And the question is: Whose kid's getting that money?"

"Ours!"

"You bet. So I'm telling all this to Tempesto a few days ago, and he mentions these belt-sander races he goes to sometimes. And, bingo, it hits me."

"What?"

"What do you mean, what? Winners use Veritas Grit."

We've arrived at a used-computer store outside Inman Square. Dwight parks, and we step out into the broiler of the world. "I love this place," he says. "They have everything. All the M.I.T. guys get their iron here."

This is the third time Tempesto has been kidnapped this summer. The first time probably shouldn't count, since he abducted himself—as a publicity stunt for a holographic light show he was projecting on the Hancock building at night without a license to do so. The second time was by a convention of cyberpunk misfits in upstate New York who fed Tempesto magic mushrooms and made him stir-fry hundreds of pounds of chicken in an old satellite dish over a bonfire. But this time it looks for real. The counter clerk takes us to a back room, where Tempesto is playing poker with three other guys. He seems positively jolly about the whole deal, but that's the way he always seems. "This is one for *The Journal of Irreproducible Results!*" he calls out as we come in, a chubby man with a bushy black beard and sunspot-flares of shiny black hair firing out around his head. He's wearing a white jumpsuit despite the heat.

"What do you mean 'irreproducible'?" I say. "You're in captivity again."

"I meant my cards," he says, laying

"I'm Danny Felner, a soft-edged kind of guy. We're coming back."

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them down. "My fourth full house today!"

One of the men has the bearing of the boss, and a beard like the grandfather of Tempesto's beard. He hands Dwight a computer printout and says, "He stays till we settle that."

The printout appears to be the tab Tempesto has been running at the store. "Good God!" says Dwight, regarding the bottom line. "What have you been doing?"

"Various things," Tempesto says. "Art. Life."

"Give me your Visa card."

"You wouldn't take a man's Visa card."

"Yes, I would. Give." Tempesto surrenders the card. "Try to imagine yourself as early man," Dwight says. "Early man when he had to shoot his horse."

"Early man didn't have guns," says Tempesto.

"All right, then, early man when he had to hit his horse on the head with a rock."

"Early man didn't have horses," I say.

"What sticklers for detail you two are," says Dwight, bending the card back and forth till it breaks in half. Then he hands the clerk his own Visa card. He points to the table. "Are you ahead at least?"

"Yeah, but we're playing for these obsolete memory chips. They wouldn't let me play for my bill."

Out front, Dwight signs the slip and the clerk heaves three identical computer printers onto the counter—big old ones from the dinosaur days of the daisy wheel. Each of us grabs one of the brutish, heavy things and staggers into the parking lot. "Why are we buying these crummy printers?" I ask, on the way to Tempesto's van.

"Because Tempesto has made an amazing discovery," Dwight says. "This particular old crummy printer happens to contain exactly the right gears—"

"With exactly the right spindles and teeth and ratios," adds Tempesto.

"For gearing up a Makita electric belt sander. The kind of belt sander we're racing tonight. No other machine known to man contains those gears."

The most astonishing variety of junk—part electronic, part lumber, part dirty clothes—is tumbled in Tempesto's van. He heaves his printer in with a crash. Dwight and I heave ours in, too.

"I'm starved," Dwight says. "Anything in the fridge?"

"I've got leftovers you wouldn't believe," Tempesto says. "Did a big dinner last night. Had a lot of people over. There's a feast waiting for you guys."

"Tempesto's a great cook, Walter," Dwight says. "Wait'll you see."

"You are, Tempesto? Really? What's your cuisine? Tuscan Transistor?"

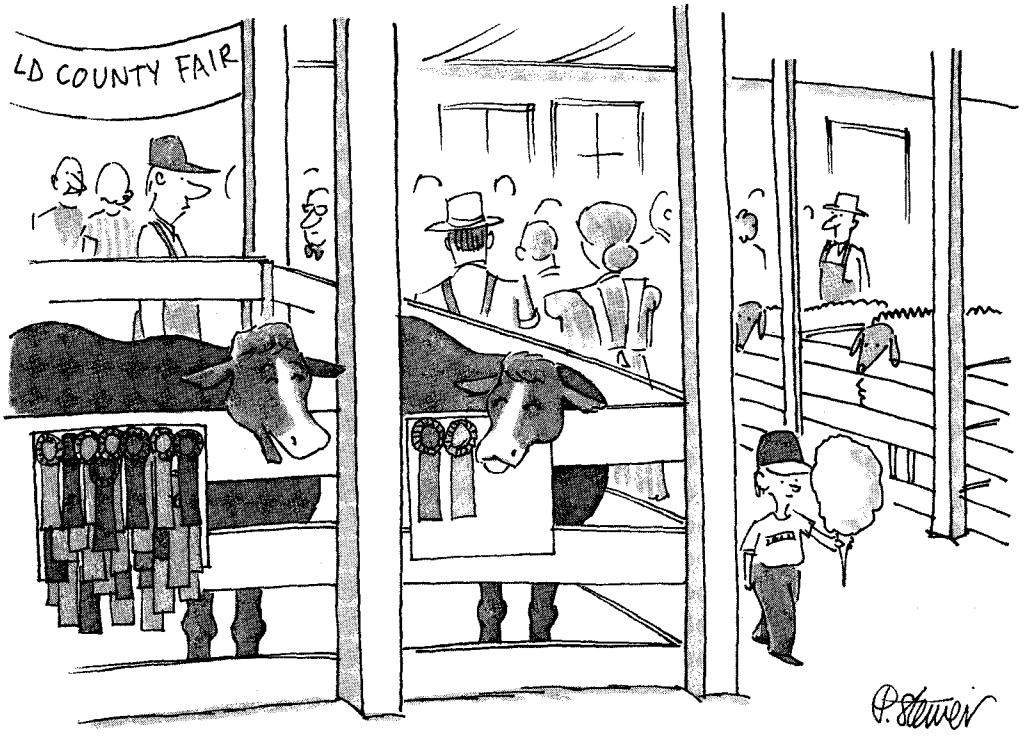
For a minute, his incredulity grapples with my incredulity. Then I see that his feelings are hurt. "You never came to my house?" he says. "You never ate my food?"

TEMPESTO'S apartment is basically Tempesto's van on a grander scale, without wheels and with electricity. A lot of electricity. Things are plugged in at Tempesto's place in a way the early electrifiers of America never intended. Power strips are scattered across the floors in every room, not a single empty socket left for one more computer, or television, or synthesizer, or CD player, or oscilloscope, or neon sculpture to take suck, from this address, at Boston Edison's breast.

Copies of *The Journal of Irreproducible Results* are lying on the counter in the kitchen. "I thought you made this up," I say, leafing through an issue.

"Why should I make things up?" Tempesto asks. "There's too much that's real already." He's pulling plastic-wrapped dishes out of the fridge and sliding them onto the counter. He calls out their contents as though announcing the guests at a ball. "Roasted eggplant with herbs and garlic. Veal Marsala, sautéed broccoli rabe. Chicken breasts with red peppers. My famous onion tart. Marinated mushrooms, mozzarella in brine, sun-dried tomatoes in virgin olive oil. Green beans in tomato sauce." He pulls a big flat bread out of a drawer—"Focaccia," he says lovingly—flips open the microwave, cranks up the conventional oven, gets a double boiler going on the stove. The heat drives us from the kitchen into the dining room, where the table is covered with circuit boards and schematic diagrams. Tempesto pushes it all aside, and we sit down with plates of food and goblets of Corvo table white. He is a great cook. These are the best leftovers I've ever had in my life. They're better than most things I've eaten the first time around.

"Drama factoid for you, Walter," Tempesto says, raising his glass. "This serviceable



"I don't care about winning. I care about being the best cow I can be."

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vino is exactly what Ben Kingsley and Jeremy Irons drink in the lunch scene of the film version of 'Betrayal.'"

"Isn't that just the kind of thing Tempesto would know?" Dwight says. "What happens in the lunch scene?"

"That's the scene where Ben Kingsley has just found out that Jeremy Irons has been sleeping with his wife for, like, years," I say. "But Jeremy Irons, who's his best friend, doesn't *know* he knows."

"They drink a load of this wine in that scene," says Tempesto.

"Whatever happened to free love?" Dwight asks. "I kind of miss it."

"It was just an introductory offer," says Tempesto.

"Speaking of cheating," I say. "Are you guys fixing this race?"

"Cheating?" Dwight says. "Progress is cheating? Early man ties a rock to a stick and he's cheating 'cause he has a hammer?"

"Did you consider the seminary?" Tempesto asks me. "You did, didn't you? You know how I know? I did, too. It's the truth. I was gonna be a priest. I never really escaped it—the red lights, the magic. They may get me yet. I can always spot a brother."

"I never knew that about you, Walter," Dwight says. "Maybe you shouldn't be doing corporate video after all."

"I probably shouldn't. It's probably a place I'm passing through."

"On your way to the priesthood," says Tempesto.

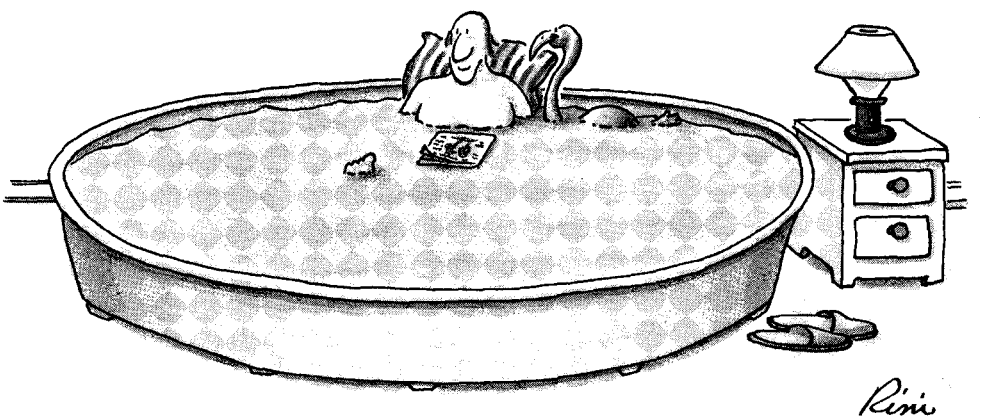
Dwight has one rule for eating—stop before it hurts. Failing to observe it, we finish our supper and waddle to Tempesto's workroom. In the middle of his bench is a plastic gallon jug lying on its side, a power cord coming out its spout, machinery dimly visible through its translucence like a ship in a bottle. The words "Veritas Grit" are written along each side in red Magic Marker. Tempesto holds it up for my admiration. Its bottom side has been sliced off, and a belt of sandpaper occupies the rectangular opening.

"That's a belt sander? What happened to it?"

"We modified it, Walter," Dwight says. "This is no longer a street machine."

It doesn't look anything like a belt sander. The plastic hood hangs around it like a lady's hoopskirt.

The Key Lime Pie Bed



Rini

• •

"Didn't that use to be a jug of milk?"

"It was springwater, actually," Tempesto says merrily. He puts a screwdriver bit in his drill and reverse-engineers one of the printers until the precious gears are out. Then he removes the sander's milky housing and puts them in there. "Makes it like lightning," he says. "Except that after a few minutes the teeth start to shear off the gears, which is why we need a steady stream of these printers." When he's finished, he hooks the sander up to some kind of tachometer on his bench. I don't know what's normal for a belt sander, but when he revs this one the needle flies right off the scale.

"Yow!" says Tempesto.

"Yow!" says Dwight.

"You're gonna cream those poor guys," I say. "You're gonna sand their faces off."

"Yes!" they both say together.

THE sun is going down on the beautiful city. We're heading east on Memorial Drive—me in the passenger seat, Tempesto in back with the sander and video gear and two of his famous lasers. Red-gold light suffuses the Bonneville through its rear window. This is Dwight's favorite stretch of road in Boston, especially at this time of day; the sunset has turned the buildings of Back Bay and Government Center into fiery pillars blazing in the air—geometrical solids made of light, as pure as Tempesto's holograms or computer graphics. Their painterly twins shimmer in the silver-blue river below. The traffic is thick and fast at M.I.T., then thick and slow down around Lotus and Lechmere and the optimistic new structures of East Cambridge. It's a scorching Friday in August, and the prosperous people are making their break for the Cape. We escape the throngs by swinging left at the Museum of Science, wherein some of Tempesto's creations are displayed, and on into the tattered margins of Somerville.

Our destination is a block-square brick building five stories tall, its entrance shadowed by an elevated piece of Route 93. Dwight carries the video camera and a garbage bag with the Makita inside. Tempesto has the two lasers. I have the tripods and the cables and the little color TV. We take the freight elevator to the top, where Tempesto's friends are hosting the belt-sander races in their custom-cabinetry shop. The shop is the whole fifth floor of the building, pulsing with loud Chicago blues from the stereo. There must be a hundred people here, but the shop has floor-standing fans and cross-draft from every direction, and it's not that bad. Sheets of plywood on sawhorses are covered with bottles of hooch and bowls of punch, dishes of hummus and baba ghanouj, salsa, chips, and wheels of cheese. The worktables have been pushed away, and people are dancing beneath springy cords for power tools which hang like bright-blue pigs' tails from the ceiling. The racetrack runs all the way down one side of this huge warehouse space—a three-foot-wide channel of upright

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two-by-fours nailed to the floor to keep the sanders inside.

You wouldn't think a two-hundred-pound man in a white jumpsuit with the words "CYBER SWINE" stitched across the back in large red letters could disappear into a crowd, but this is what Tempesto now manages to do. Most of the men here have ponytails and beards, mesh caps advertising lumber-supply houses, big hanks of keys snapped to the belt loops of their jeans. I see several guys wearing T-shirts silk-screened with the legend "HIPPIE TRASH," and more women in attendance than I would have predicted. Unlike the men, they seem to have ventured outside this building since Woodstock days. They have actual haircuts, stylish ones, and color on their faces, glittery earrings and hair clips and slinky legwear, and they all look nice, but the most interesting women in the room are the two over by the stereo, holding drinks and nodding their heads at a large middle-aged man in a gray tropical suit two or three shades lighter than his blow-dried hair.

"Benjamin Silk!" Dwight cries out, and then makes his hand into a gun and shoots Benny with it a few times. Benny scoops us toward him with his outstretched arm. I detect that he doesn't know who Rebecca is—and that he'd like to find out, the weasel.

She casts me a piercing look. "We're learning some secrets of corporate life," she says.

" 'For every back there is a knife'?"

"That's what I always say," says Benny.

"Of course it is, Benny. Where else would I have heard it? Who else has been through the wars the way you have?"

"Have you been introduced?" asks Dwight. "This is Walter's sweetheart, Rebecca."

"No!" Benny says. "I didn't realize that! You and Walter! Well, isn't that wonderful. What's a nice girl like you doing with a bum like this?"

"I've always had a thing about bums," Rebecca says.

"You think you can save 'em, right? Lots of women think that. Can I give you some advice? Forget it."

Anita puts her fingertips on her belly like someone testing a melon at the market.

"Is it dancing?" Dwight asks.

"It's at the Whisky a Go Go in there," Anita says. She's had all the ultrasounds and the amniocentesis, but she and Dwight want the baby's gender to be a surprise.

"It dances?" I say.

"The baby likes music," Dwight says. "I think it's the bass."

"Feel the baby, Walter," Rebecca says, pushing me forward.

"My treat," says Anita, raising her blouse.

"I want Walter to learn about babies," Rebecca says.

"Watch yourself there, Walter!" Benny says.

I don't know how you feel a pregnant woman. "I've never done this before," I say. I put my palms on Anita's belly. The first shock is how taut it is. I didn't think it would feel exactly like a drum. The second shock is that somebody's in there, drumming. "This is unbelievable," I say. There's an up-tempo blues playing on the sound system out here, and inside Anita the baby is carrying on like Philly Joe Jones.

"You could have one of your very own," Rebecca says.

"I don't know. It seems like an awfully big decision."

"Or none at all," Anita says.

Diagonally across the room, beneath one of the big industrial windows overlooking Route 93, Tempesto has set up his lasers on the camera tripods. "Streetlamp shooting gallery!" he calls out now over the music. "Three shots for a buck!" he adds, and we join the crowd in front of the window to see his demonstration. It's that sublime moment in a cloudless day when the smoggy yellow horizon dissolves slowly upward through values of blue into an indigo chamber containing Venus and a few airplanes. Most cars aren't using their headlights yet, but the mercury-vapor lamps have come halfway on like luminous insects flying in formation over the lanes of 93. The traffic north is moving, but south to the Cape it seems to be backed up for miles. Tempesto trains one of his lasers on the highway and presses the button to shoot. He misses a few times, then hits the photoelectric cell controlling a streetlamp on the northbound side. It goes black, to the amazement and cheers of the flock around him. Dwight pays Tempesto a dollar and aims the other beam. He's done this before; on his third shot he gets a lamp.

"I'm next!" the carpenters

"We're slapping you with a stress suit, pal!"

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shout, waving their dollar bills. "Let me try!" they cry, pushing one another out of the way.

After a minute a knocked-out lamp wakes up again, and so the underlying game is to see how many you can zap before they come back on. Little by little, patches of Route 93 go dark.

"Do men ever grow up?" Rebecca asks Anita.

"No," Anita says.

Meanwhile, Dwight has led Benny across the room to the racetrack behind us, where he stands looking down at the long enclosure on the floor and shaking his head. Dwight moves him toward the drinks. I drift over there around the dancers, and when I arrive Benny is sipping a gin-and-tonic and Dwight is at the plywood bar, drizzling hoisin sauce into a plastic cup. "This is the flakiest thing I've ever seen," Benny says as Dwight pours tomato juice and vodka in on top of the hoisin.

"They don't have any Worcestershire," he explains, and then he takes a sip. "Delicious. Walter, help me out. Benny thinks belt-sander races are a stupid idea."

"No," I say. "Really? Ever seen one?"

"I didn't even know there was any such thing."

"Well, don't judge a book by its cover, Benny. Try to imagine yourself as early man. All around early man are sticks and stones. One day it hits him: tie a stone to a stick. What's he got?"

"A hammer!" Benny says.

"Right. And then?"

"Civilization!"

"Now you're getting it," says Dwight. He fetches his plastic garbage bag from beneath the bar, and extracts the modified Makita.

"Well, get a load of this!" Benny says, turning it over in his hands, looking at the name of his new product emblazoned on its sides, the fresh belt of Veritas Grit installed on the machine. "We've got a nag running in this race?"

"Tell Benny our idea, Walter," says Dwight.

"It's simple," I say. "Winners use Veritas Grit."

Benny's smile opens up like a streetlamp coming on in the darkness. "You can't argue with that, hey?" He sips his gin-and-tonic, and thinks. "They just might go for this back at the ranch! They just might! But you gotta show us. We're from Missouri."

"I'm from the Bronx," says Dwight. "Follow me."

At the far end of the room, the men have gathered with their precious horses in their hands—Makitas and Milwaukees, Black & Deckers, Skils. The races are held in heats, two sanders at a time until two finalists remain to race the best three out of five. Yellow extension cords emerge from two knife switches at the beginning of the long enclosed track. A racer hooks his sander to a cord, waits for the signal, and throws the switch. Anita starts taping the first racers getting ready to run.

"Can you do that?" Rebecca says. "Are you O.K.?"

"It's just a tiny little camera," Anita says. "I'm fine. I love shooting."

Her camera goes through a cable to the small monitor propped on a chair. I watch the proceedings on the screen, through Anita's eye. The racers get into position; the official gives the signal; they throw the switches. The whole thing takes about three seconds—the sanders hurtling down the track so fast I'm surprised Anita can pan to get it. Somehow it's not quite the mythic deed I imagined. But Benny's enjoying it thoroughly. "Way to go, boy!" he calls out to the winner.

Most of the thirty or so contenders have shown up with the sanders they use every day, rugged machines that put bread on the table but don't know the taste of glory. After a half hour of heats, all but ten have been eliminated. Tempesto, known to be fast, has skipped the preliminaries. Now he's up. The guys with the "HIPPIE TRASH" T-shirts have the hot sander, an expensive-looking Milwaukee, but Tempesto doesn't go against them at first. He has to grind his way up through the ranks. He approaches the track holding Dwight's garbage bag, and with a grand flourish he unveils Veritas Grit.

"What the hell is that!" the other racers cry, laughing at the ugly homebrew thing. "What's Verified Grit?"

"Veritas," Tempesto corrects them. "It's Latin for Harvard."

He plugs the machine in and places it on the track next to a spanking Black & Decker, lots of heavy chrome. The official counts down to the start. When the Makita gets the juice it makes a cracking sound they haven't heard around here since Yastrzemski retired, bucks into the air, hits the floor

"I'm thirsty. What kind of water does your mother buy?"

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and zigzags out of control, pinballs against the wooden boundaries, knocks its opponent over, and finally flips right out of the track and across the floor before Tempesto shuts it down.

"What the hell was that!" the carpenters shout.

Dwight and Benny huddle around Tempesto for a conference. Tempesto seems to know what's wrong. He sticks a screwdriver into the machine to adjust some things, installs a new sandpaper belt, and they run again. Whatever he's done is what it needed, because now Veritas Grit just makes the Black & Decker look silly, smoking past the finish line before the poor Decker is halfway there.

The carpenters are mad. They demand to see the Makita. They want to hold it. "It don't weigh nothin'!" one of them exclaims. "Disqualify this thing!"

"No, boys," says Dwight. "No, no. Nobody said this was a stock-sander race. You don't change the rules in the middle of a game."

The carpenters run their knowing thumbs along the belt of Veritas Grit. "Where did you get this?" one of them asks. "I've never seen this in any store."

"A little bird gave it to me," says Tempesto, winking at Benny, who is glowing on the sidelines, gin-and-tonic coming through the armpits of his suit.

The carpenters call a time-out to tweak their machines. Rebecca puts Anita in a chair by the window and rubs her with ice while Dwight rewinds the tape to look at it.

"I'm liking this!" Benny says, watching the little screen. "I think I can sell the kid on this! This is the kind of thing he just might like!"

"That's the spirit, Benny!" Dwight says.

"I just had a thought!" Benny says. "A big thought! This could become some kind of craze! We could become the Budweiser of this!" He puts his hands in the air and then draws them apart to form the banner he sees in his mind. "The Veritas Grit World Championship Belt-Sander Races!"

"Think wild, babe!" says Dwight. "Dream, Benny!"

"Hold on!" Benny says, putting his arm around my shoulders. "Wait a minute! We could put Walter here in it! Walter here could talk about being a world-class belt-sander racer, and how he would never race without Veritas Grit."

"Great idea, Benny!"

"Except I'm not a world-class belt-sander racer," I say.

Benny gives me a quizzical look. "Of course you're not," he says. "Nobody is. It's just a fantasy we're having." Then the significance of that hits him—he's seriously considering staking his career on a fantasy—and I watch his face go through a couple of surreal changes while he wrestles with that. "We'd be manufacturing a craze, Walter. We'd be sponsoring a sporting event, the way Budweiser does. Nobody in the abrasives industry has ever done that before. They never had a sport to sponsor!"

"Benjamin meant you'd be in the video as an actor," Dwight says. "You remember—acting? Your niche in life? You'd be acting as though you were a world-class belt-sander racer."

"Oh, acting," I say.

"He gets it now," Dwight says to Benny. Then he lowers his voice and points to his head. "A lot of actors are not really all that—you know."

"We wouldn't need Einstein," Benny says. Then he slaps Dwight in the belly. "I'm liking this!"

When the races resume, a few men have removed parts of their sanders' housings to lighten them up, but these half-naked creatures run very wrong, sucking sawdusty wind and finally choking out altogether. Heat after heat, the rogue Makita narrows the field, Anita memorializing its conquest on videotape. I watch her pan for cutaways of an ecstatic Benny cheering from the sidelines. "Go, Veritas Grit!" he cries, urging his sander on with thrusts of his arms, and even here in the pandemonium I can see how nicely those shots will work when the tape is cut together, what a pro Anita really is.

In the end it's Hippie Trash versus Veritas Grit, as Dwight and Tempesto always knew it would be. The men put new belts on their sanders for the finals. I go to trackside to catch the action live. Veritas Grit's gears must be wearing down, because the first runoff looks like a tie to me. I glance back at Anita to see if she got the photo finish, but she's standing there holding her belly, looking like a person who just ate the entire lump of wasabi from her sushi dinner, thinking it was something else.

Rebecca has seen her, too, and beats me there. "The baby!" she says.

Tempesto calls a time-out and sneaks off to put new gears into Veritas Grit. Dwight hustles over and hugs his wife. "Now, look," he says. "Everybody stay cool. There's ten minutes left in this, and I don't see why we can't take care of business and have a baby, too."

"Dwight, you swine," Rebecca says.

"Rebecca, I'm closing an important

THE TIME AT THE TONE

Yesterday was an echo after you left, the air
Booming against my eardrums the way it used to do
On Sundays in Brooklyn, during those long walks
By the Navy Yard, streets empty under a pewter sky

Invisible from Manhattan when I lived there.
Turn down Fourteenth, though, just off Seventh Avenue,
And welcome to Brazil. How the fruit vender talks,
But Teresinha insists his oranges are high,

And I watch a horse tied to the back of the stand
Switch flies, her stiff black tail like the plume
Worn by the captain of the President's guard

At the country club in Lima, as he holds my hand
And my father takes a snapshot for the sulk room
In Akron, wind braiding the willow in the yard.

—Ron Horning

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business deal. We need this business to buy Pampers and strollers and everything, O.K.? Is your car air-conditioned? No? Here, trade keys with me. You and Walter take Anita to the hospital in the Bonneville, and I'll be over in a half hour in your car. You won't even be in labor yet, honey," he tells Anita.

"She's in labor right now!" Rebecca says.

"She's just starting, Rebecca. You realize this will probably go on for about twenty-four hours? We went to the Lamaze classes, didn't we, babe?"

"You went to the first one," Anita says, not bitterly, just sticking up for the facts.

"We know what to expect," Dwight tells Rebecca. "You're overreacting."

"I'm overreacting?"

"You're being considerate. But you're a little worked up."

"I'm worked up?"

"Anita's going to the hospital to have a baby. People do it every day. You'll be fine, sweetheart," he says to Anita, though she seems to be going into a trance.

"Walter, you know where Brigham and Women's is, right?"

"It's where all the hospitals are, isn't it? I think so. Do I?" I ask Rebecca.

"I know where it is," she says.

THE whole concept of a freight elevator takes on new meaning as we transport Anita to ground level in the dark, creaking box. Rushing from the building to open the car for the women, I'm convinced that Hippie Trash did indeed put LSD in the beverages upstairs. I'm picking up the world like a satellite dish. I'm hearing everything. I hear the blades of crabgrass rubbing each other in the crummy sand-soil of the concrete planters along the parking lot. I hear the mechanical noises of the belt-sander race. If I had to be up there right now, the sandpaper would shred my brain. As it is, I can distinguish the scrape of every different shoe on the asphalt out here.

"Does anybody else happen to feel like they're on drugs?" I say.

"I do," Anita says.

"Drugs?" says Rebecca. "You're supposed to be driving the car."

"I can drive fine," I say, the way people always say these things.

We get Anita in the back seat of the Bonneville, Rebecca in there with her. Once I get behind the wheel, I understand what's happening to me: I have a friend who has become for the moment a creature, a mammalian creature engaged in the live birth mammals are famous for, and I'm sympathizing with that, resonating with it. I'm an animal now myself.

"Music might help," Anita says. "Could you turn on the radio?"

It's only an AM, and at first all I can find are talk shows—people claiming to have been inside U.F.O.s, telling about having fat vacuumed from their buttocks and bellies. Finally I hit music on an oldies station—Little Eva singing "The Loco-Motion."

"That's good," Anita says. "I like that song."

"Remind me what I do now?" I call to Rebecca in back.

"Go down this access road and make a right at the fork. I'll tell you from there. Don't go up the ramp on to 93."

"Where's that?"

"Right up there."

It's dark down here below the highway, and I don't see what she means. My skin is screaming thousands of messages at me, and I'm giving birth to a baby in my brain, and the next thing I know we're rising into the air.

"Walter!" Rebecca cries out. "I just got finished saying don't do this!"

"I got mixed up. I'm sorry. Let's not fight, O.K.? Dwight and Anita never fight. We always fight. Plus, I'm having some kind of psychedelic experience."

"Well, go back! Back the car down the ramp and get off!"

But it's too late. We're up there now. The space behind me was the only free slot on this whole merciless highway, and it's been filled by a car, which in turn left a space that has been filled by another car, like one of those puzzles of linked plastic numbers sliding around in a frame. One little mistake and we're hopelessly locked in a grid.

Beneath the spectral mercury-vapor light, the traffic is moving in geological time. We need a helicopter right now. I open my door and stand on the frame to look out over the cars. It's just more of the same, forever and ever. The atmosphere is a kiln where thousands of clay cars are

"I thought 'viola da gamba' and then, of course, I thought of you."

• •

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baking. Anita can't stand it, and I have to get back in. Now that we're not moving at all, the air-conditioning is dragging Dwight's old behemoth to the tar pits. The temperature gauge edges into the red as I watch.

"I have this unbelievable urge to push," says Anita.

"Well, don't do it!" I say.

"She must have been in transition at the races," Rebecca tells me.

"Really? Jesus, Anita, didn't you know the baby was coming? I thought women just sort of, you know, knew things like that."

"I felt a little crampy," she says. "I thought it was the baba ghanouj."

On the theory that action is better than inaction, I pull off the road and make a run for it down the shoulder. This works for about a hundred yards, until the shoulder suddenly stops. I try to pull back into my lane, but the people alongside us are getting revenge by not letting me. I'm looking around the car for something to threaten them with when I see Dwight's car phone. I'm not used to the idea of phones in cars; I forgot it was there. "I have to make a call," I say, getting out and closing the door gently on the telephone's cord. A woman answers when I dial 911. "We've got somebody having a baby here," I say.

"I'm showing you on a cellular phone," she says. "She's having the baby in a car?"

"Right. We're stuck in traffic on 93 South."

"Where on 93? Between what exits?"

"No idea. We're at the place where the shoulder of the road disappears."

"Where were you coming from?"

"About a quarter mile from here. It was Somerville then."

"What can you see right now?"

"The Schrafft's building."

"In front of you?"

"Right. Affirmative."

"You're in Somerville. Describe the car. Year, model, color, plates."

"1964 Bonneville. White. Four-door. I can't see the plates, the phone won't reach that far. It's the father's car. He's not here. Could you send a helicopter?"

"No, sir. We can't land a helicopter on that part of 93. We'll send an ambulance."

"What if it happens before they get here?"

"Make sure the baby can breathe. Put it on its mother's breast. Don't cut the cord."

"What about germs? The car is filthy."

"An unread newspaper is relatively germ-free. You can deliver the baby on that if you have to. We'll have somebody there as fast as we can." Then she hangs up.

The traffic has moved a little bit. A Lincoln Town Car is alongside us now, the people in it watching me talk on the phone. They remind me of my mom and dad. I knock on their passenger window. The lady lowers it with the electric button. "Hi. Would you folks happen to have a recent newspaper?" I see a crisp copy of today's *Wall Street Journal* right there on their back seat.

"Need the show times for the movies?" the man calls out sarcastically. "Why don't you just call on your phone there, big fella?"

Maybe he is my father, after all. I crouch down to check. No, he isn't. "We're not going to the movies. A woman in our car is having a baby, and in a pinch you can deliver babies on newspapers. That *Wall Street Journal* right there would be fine."

He makes his wife put up the window, and I see them arguing about it without sound, gesturing wildly. I'm about to knock on the next car when the radiator goes on the Bonneville, sheets of white steam spewing from the grille and hood with a horrid hissing sound. The man gets out of the Lincoln with the newspaper and looks in our car. I look in with him. It's like a wolf den in there, one female hunkering on the floor, another one, heavy with young, lying on the seat. They're breathing rapidly through their mouths and staring out with eyes dilated to black disks. The man pushes the newspaper at me and backs away, but his wife is already out of the Lincoln. "Oh, my God!" she cries when she looks in the car.

I get back in with the phone and open the *Journal* to its deep middle sections. "The lady on 911 told me this," I tell Rebecca. "We're supposed to spread these out over the seat. Anita, an ambulance is on the way. Hang in there, O.K.?"

"The women in my family have pretty easy births," she says between gasps of air and pain, as though her job were to comfort us. "My doctor says I have a pelvis like the Holland Tunnel." She thinks about this for a second and laughs. "Too bad we can't take it to the hospital."

"Anita, I think you're starting to rave a little bit. Try to be calm."

She snorts fiercely like a riled-up horse. I get the number of the cabinetry shop from Information, and ask for Dwight. He's still there. They bring him to the phone.

"I was just leaving," he says. "What's going on?"

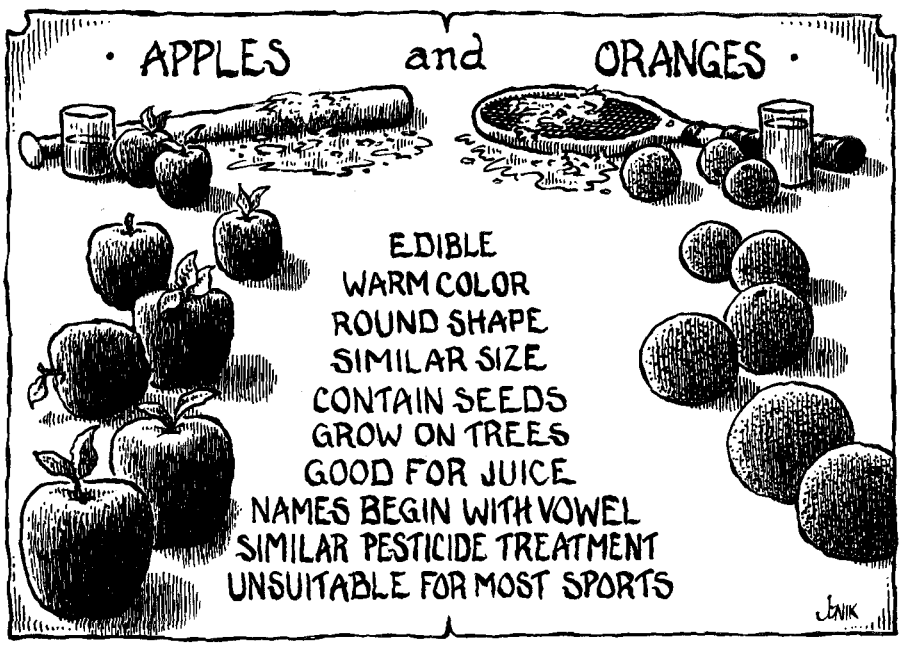
I tell him.

"This wasn't the plan, Walter," he says.

"I know it wasn't, Dwight. What can I say? We're stuck in traffic."

"What are you doing on 93 in the first place?"

"I made a mistake and got on it. Here, I'm putting you on with Anita."



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"You were supposed to be here to tell me to push," she says into the phone.

"No, Dwight, don't tell her that!" I call out. I look outside. The woman from the Lincoln has spread the word, and now about thirty people from other cars are staring in through our steamed-up windows like a gathering of spirits.

"Walter thinks you're mad at him," Anita says. "Tell him you're not."

She passes the phone back to me. "Is that you there, where all the people are?" Dwight says. "I think I can see you from here."

"Yeah, we've got a crowd here."

"The Bonneville's overheating, isn't it?"

"Yup."

"It does that when you run the air-conditioning without driving."

"I know."

"I'm not mad, Walter," Dwight says. "You're doing your best."

"Thanks, Dwight. I called for an ambulance."

"I see it coming on the shoulder right now. Should be there in a couple of minutes."

"Oh, yeah. I hear the sirens."

"You're fine now. I'll meet you at the hospital. Oh, hey! Guess who won the race."

"Who?"

"We did. Veritas Grit. Benny's going wild. He wants to see a proposal for a big promotion. And, Walter? He says he's found your niche for you. You're gonna be the Veritas Grit spokesperson. You could be looking at national TV with this."

"Gee, that's great, Dwight. Thanks."

The radio starts playing "I Second That Emotion," and then all at once the crowd around the car breaks into cheers and applause. When I look in the back seat I see that the baby has left the mother ship and is now half in Rebecca's hands, half space-walking in its birth fluids across the tiny print of the New York Stock Exchange.

"Dwight! You're a father! It's a boy!"

"A boy? The baby's born? I have a son?"

"Look at the size of this kid!"

"Where's Anita?" Dwight cries.

"What do you mean, where is she?"

"I mean how is she!"

"She seems fine. She's smiling. She's holding the baby."

"The stories are false. The names are real to stimulate sales."

• •

"It's a boy!" I hear Dwight shout to the cabinetry shop. "He's big!"

Tempesto grabs the phone over there. "We're firing a twenty-one-gun salute! Look in the steam!"

Sure enough, red filaments flash like pick-up-sticks tumbling through the white cloud around the car. The streetlamps around us start to go out.

"Walter," says Dwight. "Hold the phone up to the baby." I do that. "Dwight Junior!" he says, his tiny voice coming out of the phone. "Son! This is your father speaking!"

"Walter, let's have a baby!" Rebecca says as we gaze upon the strapping boy on his mother's breast, born in a '64 Bonneville broken down on the side of the road while Smokey Robinson sang on the radio and his father spoke to him on a car phone. I think: This will be no ordinary child.

"Sure, sweetheart," I say. "Why not?"

And then, just as I kiss Rebecca, our fogged-up car becomes a huge heart attack, throbbing with redlight and screaming sounds. Out in the distance, beyond the gaping ghost faces against the steamy glass, the ambulance has pulled to a stop behind the eight or ten cars lined up behind us on the shoulder. I fight through the crowd to meet the men coming toward me with a stretcher and a box of first-aid gear.

"What the hell happened to the lights?" the one is saying to the other.

"It's the laser beams!" I shout, gesturing back to the vapors billowing above the Bonneville. "Men in that building over there are shooting them out with laser beams!"

"Is that right?" the first man says, stopping to look where I'm pointing. "Laser beams, Louie," he says to the other guy, but the red ambulance light cancels out the red lasers so you can't see their flicking tongues in the steam anymore. "Been out here a while, huh, pal?"

"I'll never rent on the Cape again," the other man says.

"No, we go to Maine now," the first one replies. "I couldn't take this. We'd like to help you, bud, but we're here for a lady having a baby."

"It already happened!" I cry. "He's born!"

"The baby we're looking for, or the baby Jesus? We're looking for a Bonneville with a pregnant lady inside."

"Under those people!" I tell them, so drained by birth I should be on that stretcher myself. "But she's not pregnant anymore. It's a boy named Dwight Junior. Go ahead. You'll see him. A big wrinkly red guy on the phone with his dad."

—Ralph Lombreglia

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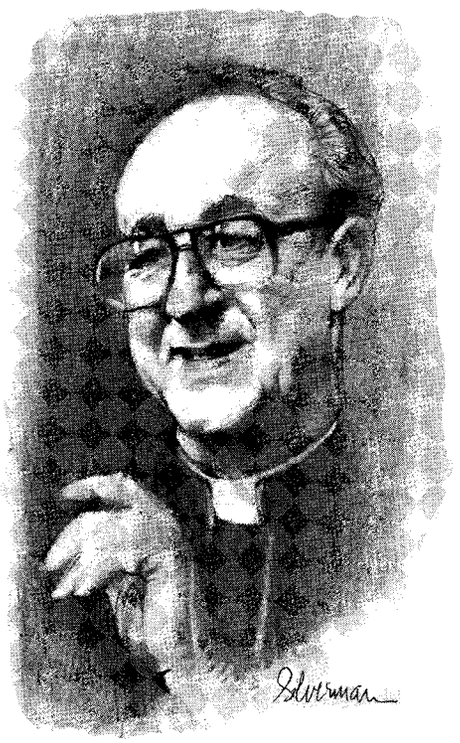
PROFILES

THE EDUCATION OF AN ARCHBISHOP—I

IN the Archbishop of Milwaukee's mail on the Monday morning after his return early last September from a monthlong vacation were communications from Dr. Adrian Holderegger, a senior professor of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Fribourg, in Switzerland; Archbishop Agostino Cacciavillan, the newly appointed Apostolic pro-nuncio, or Vatican Ambassador, to the United States; and Briana Ziolkowski, a first grader at St. Philip Neri elementary school, on Milwaukee's North Side. And there was the latest sheaf of letters from the self-styled Little Eucharistic Lamb, a parishioner in her early forties. The Archbishop was addressed variously as "Excellency" (by Professor Holderegger), "Archbishop Weakland" (by Archbishop Cacciavillan), "Uncle Rembert" (by Ms. Ziolkowski), and "Most Reverend Archbishop Weakland" (by the Lamb). Although still suffering from jet lag after his trip—a visit to Siberia, Poland, and the Ukraine—Archbishop Rembert George Weakland, O.S.B., was also energized, from having seen firsthand a Catholic Church emerging from the oppression of recently defunct Communist regimes. He found himself eager to resume work in his own archdiocese, where he is the spiritual leader of more than six hundred thousand Catholics.



On reading part of Professor Holderegger's letter—"You will receive the *doctor honoris causa* on the occasion of the celebration of the hundred years of the Faculty, at the date of the 15th November, 1990. In the meantime, we expect the consent of Rome"—the Archbishop smiled a bit boyishly, as he is wont to do when he is praised or congratulated. He would have to check flight schedules before he could reply; the date fell at the end of the annual meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, in Washington, and just before a planned trip with three of his fellow-bishops to El Salvador. Switzerland was hardly en route. "Fribourg, Fribourg," he said pensively, tapping his lower lip with his index finger and turning in his chair to address me. "Their theology school is run by Dominicans. Much of the encyclical 'Rerum Novarum' originated at that university, a hundred years ago. I can recall a classroom there with a plaque commemorating all that work, which rather boldly laid the foundation for Catholic social thought. I gave a talk at Fribourg once. I imagine they think I have something to do with that whole area of the Church's teaching—making sure it lives on, that is."

He went back to his mail, and took up the letter from the nuncio. The smile slowly mutated into an expression of wry amusement, as though someone had confronted him on the street and requested something outrageous framed in a perfectly reasonable argument. Archbishop Cacciavillan's letter concerned "a published report that a Religious Sister has been appointed to the office of Academic Dean of Saint Francis Seminary in Milwaukee," and observed that "such an appointment would be a matter of concern" to the Congregation for Catholic Education, in Rome. Dictating his response to his administrative assistant, Delphine Meyer, Weakland said that he had just returned from vacation, and needed to consult the seminary's rector before answering formally, but in his last paragraph he noted with the slightest flicker of ecclesiastical snappishness that "the Rector of our Seminary was previously the Director of the Office of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops for Priestly Formation, and I am sure he is well aware of any legislation that exists on this matter."

"Oh, it's just a lob into my court, Del," the Archbishop said, as Ms. Meyer awaited his next letter. His tone was even; the smile was back. "Very Vatican of him. Wants to know what my case is without indicating his own. So I just lobbed it back." He opened a large manila envelope from Ms. Ziolkowski and carefully unfolded a poster-size piece of construction paper divided into twelve panels, one of them proclaiming "Happy Birthday, St. John the Baptiser," another depicting stalks of wheat interspersed with succulent-looking bright-green weeds. The Archbishop had asked Milwaukee Catholic grade-school children to illustrate either the feast days that fell on summer Sundays or the Scripture passages from those Masses; there were to be winners in three categories, and their prize was to be dinner with the Archbishop, after which he would play the piano for them. "Have to find a competent judge for these," he said to Ms. Meyer, adding Briana's work to a stack of other submissions. "And, as for the Little Lamb, it's time. She claims that she's possessed and that only I can exorcise her. She's having visions, revelations. She's a saint, doing penance for others. Problem is, she has a few priests believing her. I've got to get a panel of three or four psychologists together and have them interview her. It's turning into a cult. This has to stop."

Rembert George Weakland is one of three hundred and five bishops and archbishops appointed to the hundred and eighty-eight dioceses and archdioceses of the Roman Catholic Church in America. His morning's mail is a fair sample of what a Catholic prelate of his rank encounters. The honorary

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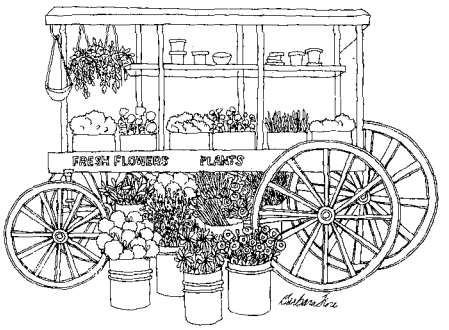
degree would be his sixteenth; it was an acknowledgment of the esteem in which Weakland is held in some quarters of the Catholic Church for his forthright yet measured stands on many of the social and doctrinal issues with which the Church is beset. The letter from the nuncio was the latest round in a continuing *mano a mano* with the Vatican, which has not been so ready in its praise, and to which an outspoken man like Archbishop Weakland is somewhat suspect. Briana represents the youngest of the many populations he attempts to serve, and the Eucharistic Lamb the ardent, impassioned fringe of Catholic belief.

While Weakland is, by Church fiat and tradition, the autonomous leader of things Catholic within the forty-eight hundred square miles of his archdiocese—a domain embracing two hundred and eighty-seven parishes and missions, five colleges and universities, a hundred and sixty-eight elementary and high schools, twelve hospitals, nine hundred and fifty-three priests, a hundred and two brothers, twenty-eight hundred nuns, and thousands of deacons and lay workers—he finds himself in something of a marginal position these days. For all those who applaud and honor him, there are many who want him deposed, censured, or silenced. He is, moreover, one of a decreasing number of prelates appointed before 1978, when the current Pope, John Paul II, was elected; more than half the American bishops now holding office have been appointed since that time. If one characteristic links these newer members of the hierarchy, it is that they are far more comfortable with the doctrinal orthodoxy that John Paul II espouses than with the more open and pastoral spirit of his recent predecessors—one of whom, Pope Paul VI, appointed Weakland an archbishop in 1977.

His minority status within the American hierarchy aside, Weakland is something of an anomaly among Catholic bishops. He is not a product of the diocesan priesthood, which produces the vast majority of the episcopate; indeed, he never served as a parish priest. He is a Benedictine monk: Rembert is his monastic name, and the O.S.B. stands for Order of Saint Benedict. Belying the image of monastic life as one spent within the cloister, he has travelled extensively since he was ordained, forty years ago, and he is fluent not only in Latin and Italian—the lingua francas of Catholicism—but also in German, French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Russian. He is a concert-quality pianist, having trained at Juilliard. For some twenty-eight years, he has been a religious superior: first as a Benedictine abbot, then as the abbot primate for the Benedictine order worldwide, a post he held for ten years before he became an archbishop. His staying power is noteworthy. Becoming a bishop or an archbishop is no longer universally considered the splendid capstone to a clerical career; for some it is closer to a millstone.

American bishops complain openly and often that they are being pulled in two directions at once. A significant proportion of their constituency neither pays them homage nor looks to them for guidance yet demands that they work to bring about change in the Church's stand on issues ranging from priestly celibacy and the ordination of women to birth control and abortion. At the opposite pole are the traditionalists, who implore them to return the Church to the certainty it enjoyed before the Second Vatican Council, and are ready to report perceived transgressions to Rome. Even some of the new appointees find themselves chafing under the mantle of dogmatic consistency the Vatican wants them to wear. It is an extraordinary period in the life of the American Church—one that Church historians see as more dissonant, in terms of the disparity between the beliefs and practices of the faithful and the official teaching of the Church, than ever before. It is a time when the unimaginable happens regularly. In recent years, several bishops have resigned their posts because of alcoholism, scandal, or simply the stresses attendant on the office. The stress factor alone has been enough to cause a number to take extended leaves of absence: Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen, of Seattle, who was censured by Rome for incorporating women, former priests, and homosexuals more fully into the workings of the Church and for allowing non-Catholics and divorced Catholics to receive Communion, is perhaps the best known of these; others are Archbishop John Quinn, of San Francisco, and Bishop Eugene Gerber, of Wichita. The *National Catholic Reporter* noted in a major article last year that American bishops now freely admit that the stressful nature of their posts "is taking a severe toll on their physical and mental health." And yet Archbishop Weakland, though he is at the vortex of the Church's Sturm und Drang, not only carries the burden of his office easily but plainly enjoys what he does for a living. Unlike many of his brother bishops, he seems to have dealt successfully with his personal shortcomings and professional frustrations. He has avoided being typecast either as a categorical liberal, like Thomas Gumbleton, of Detroit, and Francis Murphy, of Baltimore, or as a diehard conservative, like Austin Vaughan, of New York, or Theodore McCarrick, of Newark. If he is not the most vocal or the most widely recognized bishop in America, he is probably one of the most effective.



The job—if it may be called that—of bishops is defined by canon law: they are "teachers of doctrine, priests of sacred worship, and ministers of governance." They are also "successors of the Apostles by divine institution"; in no other religion is there both a line of consecration going back to the founder (in this case, Jesus Christ) and a codified global hierarchical system ultimately responsible to one person (the Pope). As members of an episcopate that was firmly established by the early second century, Catholic bishops are at once the supreme authority within their sees and the linchpins linking their people and priests to the Vatican—the place where Church doctrine is forged and safeguarded. Canon law further states that a bishop possesses all power "required for the exercise of his pastoral office, except for those cases which the law or a decree of the Supreme Pontiff reserves to the supreme authority of the Church or to some other ecclesiastical authority." Some canon-law experts interpret this to mean that

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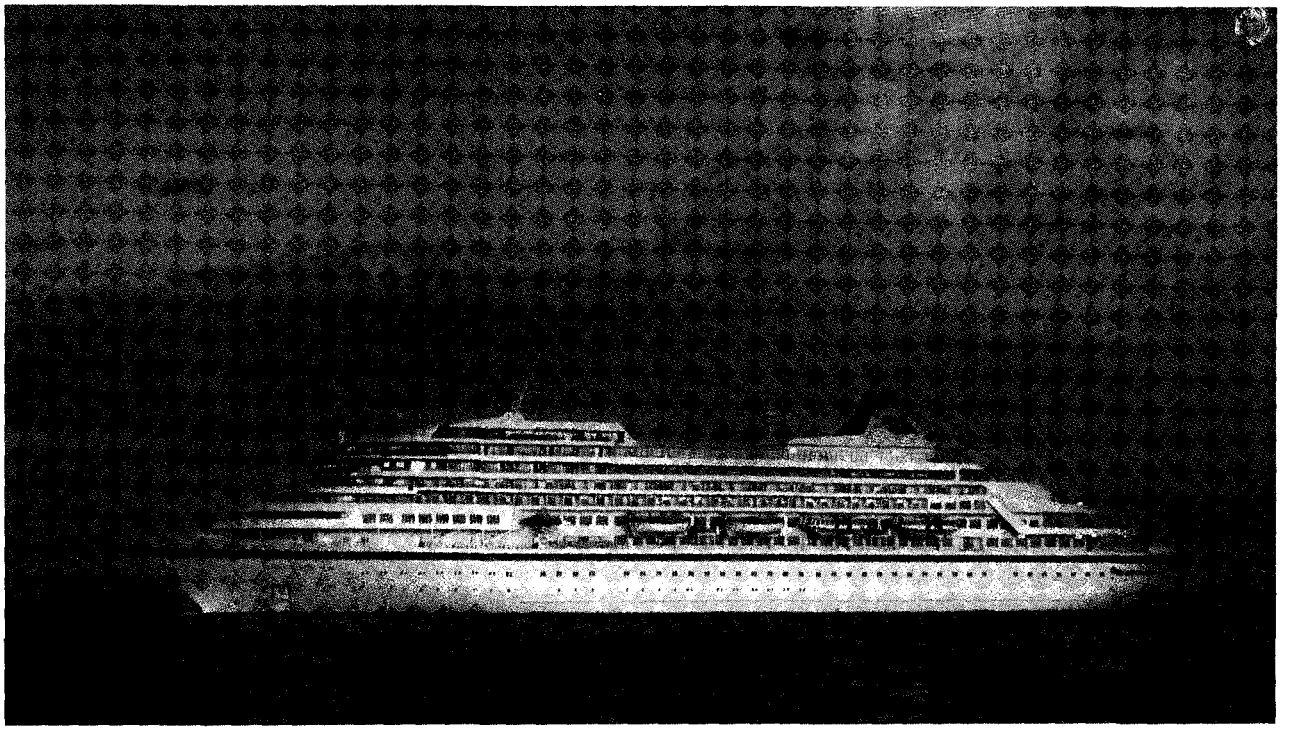

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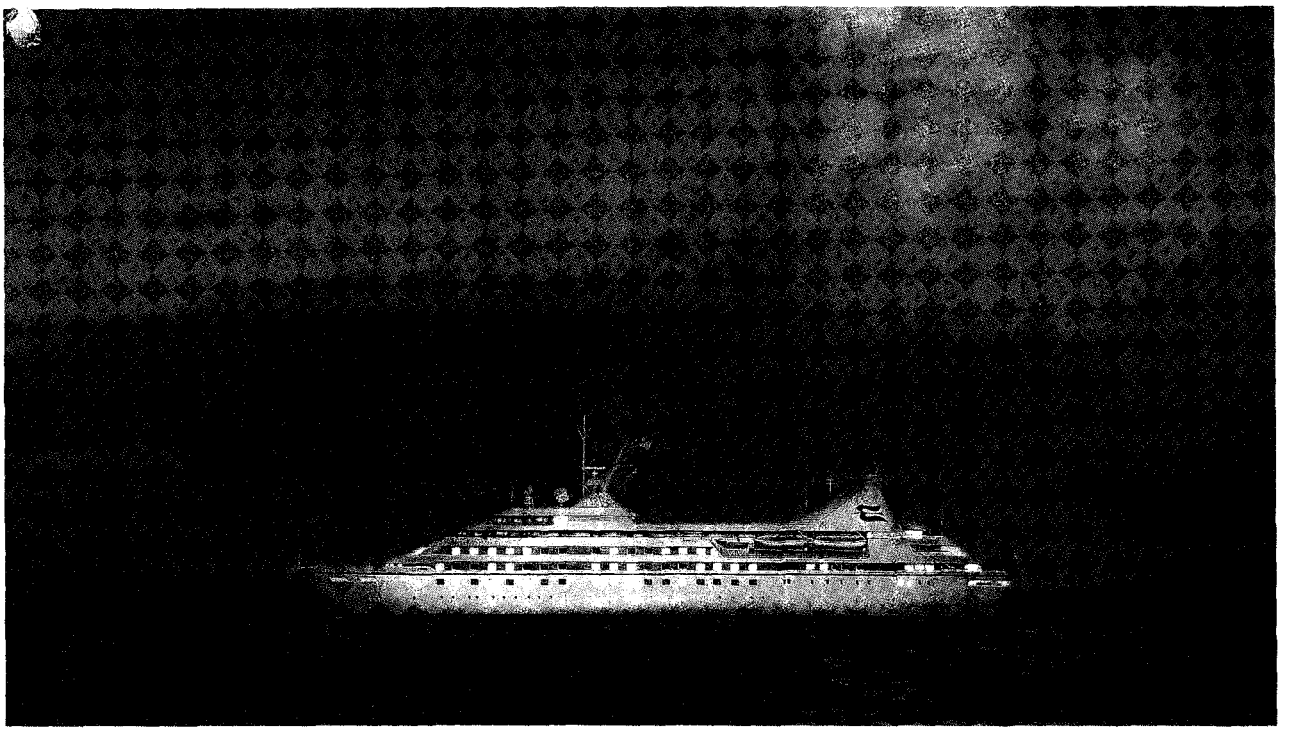

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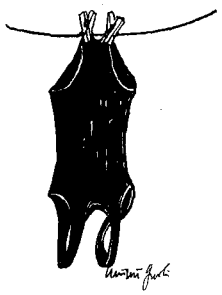
there is no actual restriction on the power of a bishop: the only limitations are his willingness and his ability to wield that power. A bishop's power is termed "ordinary"—that is, inherent in the office—and although the Pope can curb the exercise of episcopal power or delimit the geographical area in which it is exercised, he cannot alter or suppress its essential character. In practice, however, it is autonomy on a leash—a leash whose length each prelate must determine for himself, and which can be tugged at any time by the hand of Rome.

Archbishop Weakland is a tall man, about six feet two, with thinning brown hair and a slight paunch that nudges his black clerical shirt over his belt. He is sixty-four years old. His eyes are hooded by fleshy lids, which give him a somewhat grandfatherly appearance. His lips are thin and have a tendency to purse before and between sentences. The drama inherent in his office is cloaked in a steadfast routine, and on my first visit to Milwaukee late last summer, when he was living in the rectory of the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist (he recently moved into a renovated brick house on the grounds of the archdiocesan seminary), his meticulousness was apparent. The apartment, a suite of three rooms on the rectory's second floor, was neat and airy, lined with shelves holding records and compact disks (mostly classical, and arranged alphabetically by composer) and books (so many that his library long ago overflowed into nearby guest rooms). His living room was dominated by a Mason & Hamlin grand piano, its surface kept bare, out of a craftsman's pride in the fine tool of his trade; within the solid wood case and steel frame, built in 1912, was a new, German-made movement. In an adjoining study was a reclining chair with a stack of books on the floor beside it, among them a Russian edition of "The Brothers Karamazov," works on the Middle East by David Shipler and David Grossman, some Italian novels with the English translation on facing pages, and Iris Murdoch's "Message to the Planet." On the desk was a laptop computer, on which the Archbishop writes position papers, pastoral letters, a weekly column for the *Catholic Herald* (the archdiocesan newspaper), and reviews for publications ranging from the New York *Times* to *Commonweal*.



His day began, the Archbishop told me, with a period of "puttsing and praying." He would awaken around six, and, being a slow riser, shuffle about in bathrobe and slippers "half praying, half daydreaming." He might sit in what he referred to as a "yogish" position for a period of meditation, or spend fifteen minutes exercising on a NordicTrack beside his bed. After a shower and shave, he would read the Scripture passages for the morning's Mass, and then take from his closet one of eight identical black suits and a pair from among ten pairs of black lace-up shoes. (Although his wardrobe also includes slacks, sports shirts, and innumerable sweaters—the bane of most priests and bishops, because they receive so many as presents—he has no nonclerical suits and owns only one sports jacket.) On most mornings, he would descend to the rectory's common room at seven-fifteen and join the two priests of St. John's—Father James Brady and Father James Lobacz—and his priest-secretary, Father Leonard Van Vlaenderen, for morning prayer. Then he would walk through a series of passageways to the cathedral, where he customarily said the seven-forty-five Mass, unassisted by an altar boy or a lay reader. Much like parish priests throughout America, he would turn on the lights himself, refill the cruets with water and wine, take hosts from an airtight jar, light the altar candles, and vest in the sacristy. Only when he reached into a drawer and withdrew a purple zucchetto, the silk skullcap that is the sign of his office, was it apparent that he was not simply a priest.

Some fifty people regularly attended the seven-forty-five Mass, at which the Archbishop would deliver a four- or five-minute homily. Often the theme dealt with the vicissitudes of belonging to a changing Church and the need for faith in the midst of it all. "The Pharisees make me nervous—washing the outside of the cup, then the inside of the cup—so wrapped up in the incidentals," he told his congregants one morning. "We all have to be on guard to see what is really important. Me, too. When I'm confirming a girl with so much blow-dried hair over her forehead that my thumb has to fight its way through the thicket, am I thinking of that incidental or the power of the sacrament? Is it against our faith to allow girls to assist at the altar, or is that just an incidental? We get so provincial, so worked up about such silly things, and we forget what really counts."

After breakfast, at which the Archbishop would read through three newspapers—the Milwaukee *Sentinel*, the Chicago *Tribune*, and the New York *Times*—Father Van Vlaenderen would drive him, in an episcopally appropriate dark-red 1988 Pontiac Bonneville, to the chancery, some ten minutes away in the Archbishop Cousins Catholic Center, on South Lake Drive. Weakland passed his driver's test years ago, just before leaving for a conference of Benedictine abbots in Rome, but his first forays behind the wheel in the Eternal City terrified him. He has a Wisconsin driver's license, but he prefers not to exercise this temporal privilege.

Weakland's chancery office is sparer than the study in the rectory, and much larger. Here his bookshelves hold a set of the writings of the Church Fathers, the code of canon law, and a set of *Origins*, a weekly publication of the Catholic News Service containing the latest Church documents along with reprints of speeches and reports affecting the Church. Space is not at a premium in the Center, a sprawling pale-red-brick complex built by Weakland's immediate predecessor, William Cousins, who had intended it as a preparatory seminary. It was finished in 1963, just as the bottom was about to drop out of priestly vocations with the upheavals following Vatican II, and was meant to accommodate five hundred students. In 1979, when Weakland shut it down, only a hundred and fifty were enrolled. The building was turned into archdiocesan offices and a retirement home for priests in 1984, and it may well be the only Church administration building in America with a full-sized swimming pool and a basketball court of such quality that it is used for practice by a National Basketball Association team (the Milwaukee Bucks).

Archbishop Weakland usually reserves the morning for attending to administrative tasks, reading and an-

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swering his correspondence, and scanning his airmailed copy of *L'Osservatore Romano* and items from the Catholic News Service wire which have been highlighted for him by the chancery's Communications Office. Over his desk is the official photograph of the one man on the face of the earth to whom he is accountable—Pope John Paul II. The Pope's is a steady, powerful gaze, at once immediate and eternal, riveted on the opposite wall. Behind the Archbishop, on a table, is a two-foot-high bronze sculpture of Pope Paul VI, the man who appointed him. Paul's head is cocked quizzically, his arms are extended, and his eyes are trained squarely on the middle of Archbishop Weakland's back. It is difficult to imagine a sound—except, perhaps, the bark of a drill sergeant—emanating from the strong, bold picture of the current Pope. But from the sculpture might come a far less commanding voice—that of a fellow-foot soldier who knows well the vagaries of battle.

Though Archbishop Weakland handles an enormous amount of paperwork, he is hardly an executive centrist. He delegates routinely, and he has a cabinet, made up of both clergy and laypeople, to which he has given broad powers within the archdiocese. It is a point of pride with him that he can leave for a month, as he did on his recent trip, and never have to phone the office.

Often, the Archbishop has lunch in the chancery cafeteria, sitting with a different group of archdiocesan employees—there are some two hundred people on the staff—each day. The afternoon typically holds a full schedule of appointments and staff meetings. The range of people Weakland sees is impressive, both in its variety and in its size; many of his visitors could well have their concerns dealt with at a less exalted level. A C.E.O. whose conglomerate has an annual budget approaching a quarter of a billion dollars—the total of chancery, school, and parish expenditures in Milwaukee—would certainly be more discriminating. The Archbishop's appointment calendar is the antithesis of management by objective. One afternoon, a Nigerian priest currently serving in a Chicago parish was accorded a hearing even though the Archbishop knew full well that the man would be asking for personal financial aid (some of which the archdiocese of Chicago was already providing) and also for help for his diocese back in Africa (a function more properly left to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith or to a mission office within the diocese). Nonetheless, Weakland listened graciously to his pleas for more than twenty minutes, and told him what channels he might make use of. Next came a delegation of angry laypeople, who complained about the way priests were being assigned to parishes; they wanted more say in the matter. The archdiocesan vocation directors expressed doubts about a new approach to recruitment; the president of a Catholic women's college wanted to know whether she should ask for the resignation of a board member who was about to proclaim his pro-choice stand on abortion (Weakland said he didn't think it was necessary but would support her decision); members of Milwaukee's Hmong community asked him to attend their upcoming national convention.

The next morning, a delegation of six Milwaukee Ukrainians came to see the Archbishop. They were disturbed by a lecture he had given at their church in which he alluded to the historical anti-Semitism of Catholics in the Ukraine. Weakland invited the group to lunch (Milwaukee bratwurst and a pot of baked beans), and the conversation elucidated his manner of "dialogue"—a word often used in religious circles these days. Quietly and with great dignity, and always addressing him as "Your Excellency," the Ukrainians—four men and two women—called the reports of pogroms by Ukrainian Catholics during the Second World War blatant lies. The conflicts with Jews were over "political differences" or were due to "economic pressures," they said, and were not acts of anti-Semitism. They spoke in defense of John Demjanjuk, a Ukrainian condemned to death by an Israeli court for atrocities committed at Treblinka. How could they teach their children pride in their Ukrainian heritage, they asked, when such slurs abounded? The Archbishop listened attentively, and—as is his custom in emotionally charged situations—responded circuitously. In-

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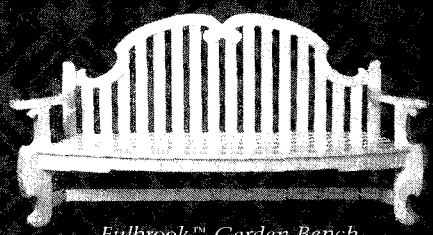

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stead of addressing their points directly, he reviewed the highlights of his recent trip to their homeland. "There was Archbishop Sterniuk—who spent decades in a tiny room in Lvov, not allowed to say a public Mass—finally in the cathedral, which had just been returned to use as a Catholic church, with thousands of people around him, all of them weeping with joy. I stood beside him, and was honored to take Communion from his hand." The Milwaukee group nodded approvingly, for (as Weakland knew) the eighty-five-year-old Volodymyr Sterniuk is a figure beloved by Ukrainians all over the world.

"It is a wonderful time for the Ukrainian churches," Weakland continued. "But, yes, what you read in the papers is true. Anti-Semitism is on the rise. In the Ukraine, in Russia, in Poland. I saw anti-Semitic signs in Krakow, and I asked the tour guide why they weren't painted over, and she said, 'Oh, it's nothing.' Not only there but here. In Kenosha, in Madison—worldwide. I mentioned this issue to Archbishop Sterniuk." Weakland paused for effect, and they nodded sombrely, waiting for the judgment of a man they trusted. "And he agreed. It's with us again, and we have to be watchful not to let it go on."

The Ukrainians thanked the Archbishop profusely for affording them a hearing, and before they left they asked to have their picture taken with him.

"What I didn't say to them," he told me later, "was that although Sterniuk acknowledged the rise of anti-Semitism, he also remarked, 'Oh, you know how they'—meaning Jewish people—'are.' And when I asked him if he shouldn't say something about anti-Semitism he countered with 'Oh, no. Then we will have to admit we were wrong.' How would it help things if I told these good people about that, just so I could win the argument? That's easy to do, but what's gained by it? I didn't live Sterniuk's life. I don't know what pressures he's under. It's easy to come in for a few days and know exactly what everybody should do and say; we bishops have a talent for that. I think that now they'll be a little more sensitive about the issue of anti-Semitism. That's all you can do. Nothing changes dramatically. Life is a series of almost imperceptible changes. You hope you're moving people in more or less the right direction.

"Are some of these meetings boring? Unnecessary? A waste of time? People need to talk, to be heard, even though nothing will come of it, and"—he smiled—"I need to listen, though nothing may come of it. I often think I know exactly what needs to be done, but I'm terribly wrong sometimes. I need to speak both to those who are my friends and to those who are not my friends. But in real dialogue. If you want to exercise any meaningful authority in the Church today, you have to listen not just to the most agreeable voices, and not solely to the edicts of Rome. Rather, you listen to where the spirit is—you hear one small voice, and you say, 'That's it!' Not consensus—that's no way to lead. I'm surely influenced by the third chapter of the Rule of St. Benedict: When anything important is brewing, you call the community together and listen for the spirit. And you allow the youngest, least experienced member to speak first, so he won't be overwhelmed by all the experts."

Archbishop Weakland always makes room for members of one group: like all Catholic prelates today, he finds himself spending a considerable amount of time dealing with his priests. Vocations are shrinking precipitously—in Milwaukee as well as in virtually every diocese in the United States. In 1977, when the Archbishop was appointed, he had five hundred and forty-seven diocesan priests available to serve two hundred and sixty-five parishes. Today, he has only three hundred and seventy-four active parish priests, but four additional parishes. It is not only a matter of trying to fill vacancies with an ever-decreasing number of available and competent men (whose average age is greater by six years than it was when Weakland arrived); the priests themselves now demand more attention. Most of them are stretched to the limit: some priests cover two or three churches, and some are forced to preside at four, five, or six Masses on Saturdays and Sundays. Weddings, baptisms, funerals, hospital visits blur into each other as one long day melts into another. The Archbishop will quickly see any priest who asks for an appointment, but unless there is a troublesome situation or a pressing need he rarely instigates such a meeting. "They give far too much weight to a call or a personal letter from me," he commented after a phone call from one beleaguered priest. "It's usually only a case of my wanting to talk something out. So a long time ago I stopped asking them to come in."

As I spent my days in Milwaukee watching the Archbishop function both as an executive in the office and as the Church's representative at groundbreakings, installations, and the myriad other events he attends, I found him to be a strange amalgam. At once painstaking in his search for the right course, he could treat seemingly consequential matters with alarming dispatch; sometimes the humble servant, he had flashes of shameless pride; he was the competent, supremely confident executive and the lost, helpless boy. When a manuscript for a high-school course on moral issues on which his imprimatur was requested crossed his desk, he took no more than ten minutes to read parts of it before attesting to its doctrinal correctness, having assigned the line-by-line reading to a monsignor whose judgment he respected. After listening deferentially to a string of visitors, he somewhat self-consciously deplored his indecision about which of his honorary-doctorate cowls to wear to a local ceremony. (The answer proved as self-conscious as the dilemma: "I'll wear my *ferraiola*"—the scarlet floor-length cape of his office—"instead. That will outshine them all. Other bishops love to wear theirs on public occasions like this.") He can unflinchingly make the difficult decision to remove an ineffective pastor or to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on a construction project, yet he has not mastered the simple sequence of numbers required to make a long-distance call on the chancery telephone system. He refuses to drive. There is acuity in decision making, a certain reluctance to fully grow up, the controlled arrogance of an intelligent man—controlled most of the time.

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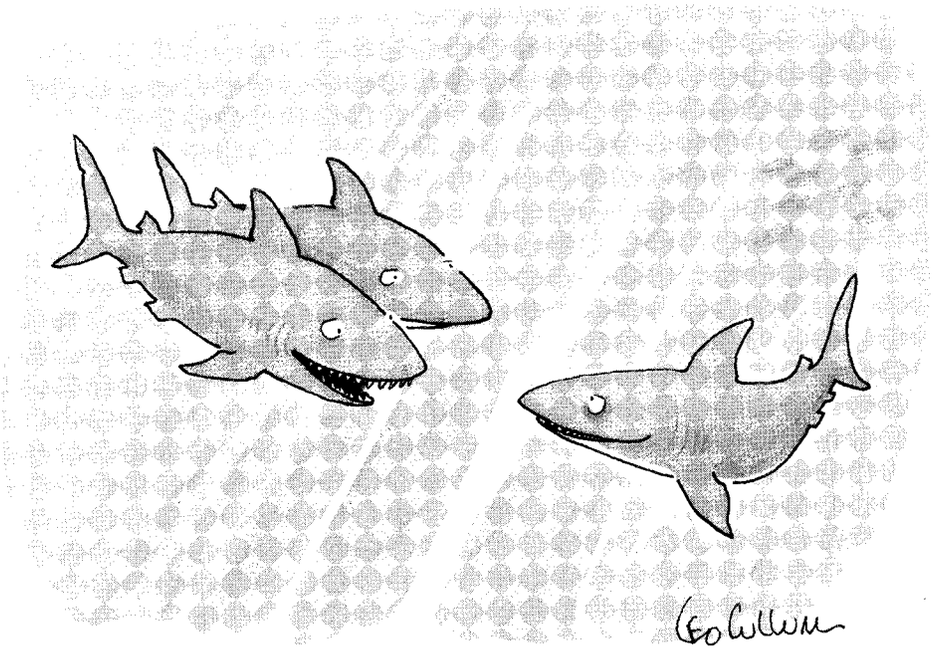
"Like almost everybody else, I'm a swirling mass of competencies and insecurities," he said one afternoon, allowing me a brief glance into a box that is usually well sealed. "When I feel I'm over my head, I become officious, moody, mechanistic. It's then that I say to myself, 'Is anybody going to listen to a poor kid from Patton, Pennsylvania? Will they find out who this is beneath the fancy robes?' Everyone who thinks Weakland is always so sure of himself should live in Weakland's head for a while."



"We usually have a light breakfast, then a feeding frenzy in the early afternoon, and that's it for the day."

• •

PATTON is a town of twenty-two hundred inhabitants, high in the bituminous-coal region of the Allegheny Mountains of western Pennsylvania. George Weakland was born there, in 1927, the youngest son of Basil and Mary Weakland. There were two older sisters and an older brother; two more sisters would follow. Despite the fact that Patton was the headquarters for the area coal companies and was made up of a broader cross-section of people than most Pennsylvania mining towns are, it was a remote, windswept outpost. Basil Weakland, having served in the Marine Corps during the First World War, followed his father into the management of the family-owned Palmer House, a four-story local hotel with a wrap-around porch, where the family lived. A fire gutted the hotel in 1929. "It killed my father, too," the Archbishop recalls. "Somehow, there had never been enough to challenge him in that little town. After the fire, he never really worked again—just sat in the charred rooms day after day, depressed. During the War, he had served in the Dominican Republic, and he probably picked up malaria there; a few years after the fire, he developed pneumonia. But my mother was very wise about it: she didn't shield us from the fact that he was dying. We were in the room when he died. I remember the death rattle. He had a military funeral, and I also remember, very well, taps being sounded, and the second bugle answering from the distance. His actual funeral Mass I have no memory of."

At their father's death, the oldest Weakland child was nine, the youngest seven months; George Weakland was six years old. His mother, who had been a grade-school teacher before her children were born, was forced onto public assistance in the ensuing years, and the family faced the indignities of poverty. "Down on rent," they moved from one shabby house to another, and Mary Weakland made meal after meal of the surplus corn meal, powdered eggs, and milk they were allotted. Still vivid in the Archbishop's mind are the Sunday mornings, when his mother sought to predict which Mass the better families, who had paid for the pews on which their names were emblazoned, would attend. On too many Sundays, she guessed wrong, and the Weaklands would be sent to the rear of the church when the rightful occupiers appeared.

But along with the indignities of being poor, there was a strength running through the family. Mary Weakland was a proud woman, who bore her circumstances with a certain grace and presented herself for welfare food or clothing as if she were shopping at a fine store. Just to be a Weakland was to bear an old and revered name in the largely immigrant coal range: the family had arrived in America around 1641. Family folklore included stories of intermarriage with Indians, of the hardships of the American frontier, of the struggle to keep a Catholic faith alive without the benefit of clergy; back when Weaklands first settled in Pennsylvania, baptisms were performed and marriages witnessed by Catholic elders. It was a family that had overcome adversity before.

George plunged into books well before his schoolmates learned to read. By the age of seven, he had taught himself to pick out tunes on the family's upright piano. At eight, he began to work his way through a ten-volume set of Elson's "World's Best Music," and completed much of it before he had his first piano lesson. ("What else was there to do in a small Pennsylvania town when you had no money and few toys?" the Archbishop remarked.) By the time he reached the seventh grade, he was playing the piano more than respectably, and the next year he was made a church organist. The top student in his small, four-room grade school, he quickly became accustomed to being singled out for excellence. His mother used to have to shoo him out of the house so that he would get some air; George was more interested in music and the workings of his mind than in games of mumblety-peg, catch, and hide-and-seek. If the early pictures of him in the family photograph album are any indication, he was happy in his self-made world; he appears perpetually on the verge of bursting into laughter.

Nevertheless, as the Archbishop and I walked the streets of Patton last winter and he pointed out the land-

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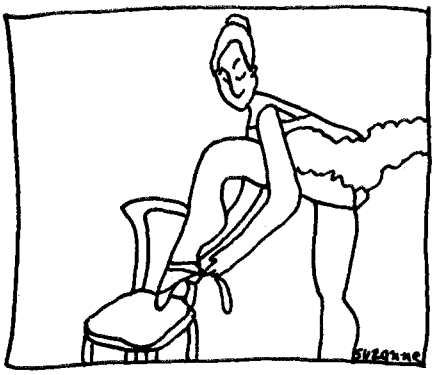
marks of his youth I got the impression that he was talking about a boy who was to him something of an artifact, a period piece. He had once been that boy, but along the way some tie had been broken—a necessary severing, as it turned out.

Like many a good Catholic boy of that time, young George played priest. His sisters bought Necco wafers, which he used as hosts, and served as the members of his congregation while he offered "Mass." Their dolls filled in as the faithful departed when he officiated at funerals, with candles from the kitchen and appropriate weeping from his sisters. But George went beyond being merely a good little boy: he ascended to that higher form of youthful Catholic behavior that makes a certain type of nun swoon and gives other children the irresistible urge to put spiders down your back. Georgie Weakland was a "scroop"—one of those fervent Catholic kids who not only scrupulously obey the letter of the Church's law but seek ways to confront the irresolute and lead them to virtue. One Thursday night, his mother returned from working in the kitchen at Patton's Fraternal Order of Eagles and announced that she had brought home some leftover chicken salad, which would do nicely for Friday-night supper. George declared that he would not partake of it. The fact that there was no icebox in the house and the chicken salad would spoil meant nothing to him; eating meat on Friday was an outright mortal sin. George rallied his siblings to boycott the meal, and then bragged about it to the other altar boys at the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. He was overheard by Father Bertrand McFadyen, the local pastor. Father McFadyen was decidedly unimpressed. "There is a divine law, and there is human law," he said sternly to George. "This is a case of human law. Now, you go home and eat that chicken salad."

While George was still in grade school, Father McFadyen took him and a few other altar boys to visit the Benedictine Archabbey of St. Vincent, in Latrobe, some sixty miles away, where McFadyen himself had studied for the priesthood. Back in Patton, George had his family, the upright piano, the parish church, and two eighth-grade sweethearts, but when he saw St. Vincent's he truly fell in love. Founded in 1846, it was the oldest Benedictine community in the country. He was awed by its imposing double quadrangle, built in stark Bavarian monastic style, where the monks spent their days at once apart from the world and enfolded in community life. He walked the hallways, with their fine wood wainscoting and vaulted ceilings; he knelt in the magnificent church, amid towering pillars, each a solid piece of granite from Scotland. There was a huge library, and there were seemingly countless pianos; music issued from the church and from practice rooms. Men walked about in black habits, black scapulars flowing from their shoulders in front and in back, symbolizing the Christ they had taken on as their protector and advocate. Most of the men seemed happy to have given up the pleasures of the world, of marriage and family; and, indeed, to young George the experience of the monastery marked not an end but a beginning.

At the age of thirteen, he entered St. Vincent's Preparatory School. There were classes in Greek, Latin, and German; hours of practice at the piano and organ; and hours spent in the silence of the crypt below the church with his arms extended, in the emotional pleas to God of a boy intoxicated with the religious life. His musical talents blossomed, and he came to see his future as teaching music within the monastery, its seminary, the school, and the college that the Benedictines maintained. At the age of nineteen, he took his first vows as a Benedictine monk. There were then over two hundred monks at the abbey, and the more popular names were already assigned, so George Weakland was given the name Rembert, after a somewhat obscure ninth-century German saint—a Benedictine who, as it happened, was later asked to leave the cloister and become a bishop. Throughout his years as a young monk, he waited for a moment of transcendence, when he would feel the call, or hear God whisper his name. No such moment arrived, but the excitement of the place, and the fundamental goodness of the men around him, continually reaffirmed his conviction that he was in the right place. Here were God, a family, and his beloved music. Unlike many who have entered religious life at an early age, he was never to experience a major crisis of faith.



His education within the Benedictine order was amazingly diverse, and his rise through the ranks rapid. At twenty-one, he went to Rome, to study at the Benedictine college at Sant'Anselmo. He was ordained in 1951, at twenty-four—the earliest age at which a man could be made a priest without a papal dispensation. The following year, he studied music at Juilliard, and a year later also enrolled at Columbia University to work toward his doctorate.

Father Sebastian Moore, a Benedictine from England, who teaches at Boston College, was also a student at Sant'Anselmo in the late forties. He recalls the twenty-one-year-old Weakland as "a terribly good boy—you know, one of those," and continues, "He was quite conservative—perhaps too much of a fanatic for my taste. And he had that quiet arrogance about him, the self-assurance of a person who knows that he can do something very, very well—music, in his case—and that you can't. He was never considered one of the boys, and he certainly was not a monastic jock. A bit of a loner, really. I was rebelling against any authority I could find, but you could count on Rembert to be solidly on the side of whatever the Church proclaimed, regardless of what he believed in his heart. One day, we had just listened to a beautiful piece of music, and I said, 'Can't you see, Rembert, great art like that has to be directly inspired by God.' He was aghast: 'Sebastian, don't talk that way! You'll get flunked for it.' "

While Father Rembert may have been a conventional priest, he was developing into a remarkable pianist. But if there had been any lingering thought in his mind that he would have been better off pursuing a professional career in music it was banished one night in 1948, at St. Vincent's. There, with the full Westmoreland County Community Orchestra behind

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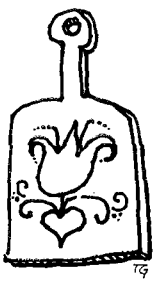
him, he gave a brilliant rendition of Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto. He returned to the dressing room, the thunder of applause still resounding in his ears, and it hit him squarely. "I was positively drained," he recalls. "And I knew then that I could never live like that. I could not do that, night after night." He taught music at St. Vincent's, served as the monastery's principal organist, and was eventually named head of the Music Department. Such monastery jobs usually lead nowhere; it is the theologians, philosophers, and canonists who are more likely to move on to higher office. So when, at the remarkably early age of thirty-six, he was elected archabbot of St. Vincent's it was a surprise both to Weakland and to his community.



The next few years marked a period of intense building at St. Vincent's. The community had experienced two major fires: one of them engulfed a good portion of the monastic quadrangle in flames; the other was the smoldering heat of Vatican II, which occasioned a difficult reassessment of monastic life around the world. Weakland seized the opportunity for change, entering quickly into the spirit of the Council even as other monasteries were taking their time about it. St. Vincent's priests and lay brothers were incorporated into a single egalitarian community, and the Divine Office—formerly recited by the priests in Latin, in which the brothers were not versed—was said together, in English. The younger monks were freed from their isolation and assigned to teach or work at the college, to give them more exposure to the secular world. A new residence was built, combining monastic serenity with a modern airiness and light. St. Vincent's had not established any new monasteries since the turn of the century; four were founded under Abbot Weakland, who took seriously the missionary thrust of Vatican II. Father Campion Gavaler, a contemporary of Weakland's, recalled the period as we talked at St. Vincent's one evening. "Sometimes Rembert could ride roughshod over people," he said. "But he had balls. He made the tough decisions, and he listened to the youngest novice as intently as he would to the Pope. There was no artifice about him."

In 1967, when Weakland was forty years old, all the Benedictine abbots met at Sant'Anselmo to pick a new abbot primate for their order. The office of primate carries little actual power, since each abbey is essentially autonomous, and abbots jealously protect their prerogatives. The two most recent primates had treated the position largely as a ceremonial one. Weakland had been happy running St. Vincent's and did not want the office, but after a series of ballots sentiment swung to him.

Whatever personal triumph the new primate felt faded quickly as, one by one, the abbots left for their home monasteries and he was shown to his new quarters, a spacious apartment-and-office suite on the Aventine Hill, with French doors and a balcony looking west to the Tyrrhenian Sea. He walked about the rooms, his footfalls echoing on the polished parquet floors, and was overcome with the most profound feeling of loneliness he had ever experienced: his days of community life were over. Never a man to wallow in self-pity, he declared the next day a day off, gathered up the eight Benedictine brothers on the Sant'Anselmo staff, and went for a picnic along the Tyrrhenian. Heedless of his predecessors' example, he at once set out to become an activist leader of the Benedictines, and travelled extensively—to Africa, South America, Asia, and to monasteries in troubled areas like Vietnam and Eastern Europe. He was heartened by Benedictine vitality; he was appalled at monasteries that had deteriorated. Some monasteries, like those behind the Iron Curtain, had been virtually abandoned. "Our monastery at Pannonhalma, in Hungary, had not had a visit from a primate since 1935," he told me. "It was more an old-age home than a monastery by the time of my visit, in 1968. The monks there had taken in old men from other orders. All the religious orders were being suppressed by the government. Many of the men in Pannonhalma had not been heard from in years; no one at their various headquarters knew who had survived. I passed from bed to bed. Men were crying. One old Jesuit begged me to tell Father Arrupe, the Jesuit superior general, when I got back to Rome that he was still alive." In Africa and Asia, he encouraged small, isolated monasteries to gather in regional confer-

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ences, in order to pool their human and material resources. He saw more than simple physical privation: some neglected monasteries of Benedictine nuns in Italy had become virtual snake pits, with mentally troubled women raging in the cloister. Weakland saw to it that the sickest nuns were removed to a clinic, and that professional help was brought in to attend to the rest. And everywhere he went he introduced Vatican II reforms, sometimes to monasteries whose occupants were living as Benedictines had lived in the Middle Ages.

Some admired Weakland's organizational decisiveness and openness to change; others thought that he had too much of a penchant for siding with the minority in any debate. The Church was transforming itself at a breakneck pace, and Weakland seemed a man exhilarated by the opportunities for positive change. "Something had happened to the old boy," Father Moore recalled. "I remember a cocktail party in London in 1968, around the time the Vatican was set to issue the document reaffirming the Church's stand against artificial means of birth control. Rembert and I were talking about one of our classmates, who had been quite a radical in our day, opposed to just about everything the Pope did or said, and who had done a flip-flop and was now supporting Rome on this issue. Rembert leaned over to me and said, 'What's up with the guy? Gone completely square, hasn't he?' He was not the good little boy I'd known in the forties. He was relaxed, and he was funny."

What had happened, apparently, was that Rembert Weakland had grown up. "I was used to being Number One, and I had to prove that over and over again," he told me one night while we were having supper in Milwaukee. "The little boy from Patton, with the torn knickers, the little boy with a towering ego, had to show them—whoever 'they' were—that he was just as smart, just as quick. My smugness, my braggadocio were signs that I wasn't so sure of myself—that I felt I was in over my head, inadequate. But I found out at Juilliard, and later at Columbia, that I could do advanced academic work as well as anybody; I wasn't a monastic hothouse plant. Then, as abbot and as primate, I saw that I could handle people well. I didn't have to fall back on Church rules to make things happen; I could use my own common sense. But watch me. When I get moody and distant, it's still there—the fear that I'm not up to the job facing me. I'd like to believe that that feeling of inadequacy is behind me, but I'm still trying to prove myself."

Weakland had met the future Pope Paul VI when he was still Giovanni Battista Montini, Archbishop of Milan. In 1956, the young Benedictine had come to Milan to examine some original manuscripts of Ambrosian chant, which was his Columbia thesis subject. (The thesis, analyzing the origins of Ambrosian chant, which preceded the now more popular Gregorian chant and flourished with it for a time, made it as far as a first draft. The Archbishop claims that he could complete it in three months, if only he had three months to devote to it.) Montini immediately took a liking to the tall, scholarly priest-musician. In 1977, when the post of archbishop of Milwaukee—a city that Weakland barely knew, having visited it only a few times—fell vacant, Pope Paul appointed him, perhaps because of personal affection for him, which had deepened during Weakland's time as primate, or perhaps because he wanted to appease those members of the Curia who thought the American Benedictine too thorough a reformer of monastic life.

Before travelling to Milwaukee, Weakland was interviewed in Rome by a reporter for the Religious News Service. His statements were both forthright and, in the light of his later concerns, prophetic. He advocated a much wider role for women in the Church, maintained that the American Church had to work harder to influence American foreign and domestic policy, and argued that the Church in developing nations needed personal as well as financial support from the American Church. In Milwaukee, the news of Weakland's appointment was extremely well received. Some churchmen speculated that Milwaukee was a stepping stone: that he had a good chance of going on to a place in the Curia, or to a larger see—like Chicago, to which two Milwaukee archbishops had ascended, eventually becoming cardinals. Some went as far as to say that he might become the first American Pope.

Despite the welcome there, Weakland's early days in Milwaukee marked the lowest point in his clerical life. His predecessor, Archbishop Cousins, had occupied a handsome residence in the Milwaukee suburb of Brookfield. Perhaps it had suited Cousins' needs—he avoided close relationships in his see, preferring the company of friends in Chicago—but Weakland found Brookfield extraordinarily lonely. "There were no sidewalks," he said of his first neighborhood in the archdiocese. "Big yards, a lovely place to raise kids. I just didn't happen to have any. And wherever you went, you had to drive. I had said yes to the appointment with my lips but not with my heart. I thought it was the worst decision I had ever made." He found himself watching more and more television, running up huge telephone bills calling old friends, and finding any excuse to get out of the house to pay an evening parish visit. To the people of Milwaukee he was the energetic, friendly new archbishop; in his own mind he was an isolated, friendless man, stripped of the last vestiges of the Benedictine life he had known for thirty-seven years. He missed the excitement of Rome, the steady stream of visitors from around the world, and his own travels. His journeys as primate had taken him to Uganda, Brazil, Kuala Lumpur; now it was Kenosha, Menomonee Falls, and Waukesha. Veal saltimbocca and spaghetti alla puttanesca gave way to the beers and brats for which Milwaukee is infamous. Weakland never unpacked more than the bare essentials in the Brookfield house. Not long after he moved in, he directed that it be sold, repacked the essentials, and moved downtown to St. John's rectory.

The new archbishop knew nothing of diocesan affairs and management, never having been a diocesan priest. Moreover, he was completely unaware of the weight his words carried, now that he was the spiritual leader of a moderately large city. His offhand remarks—firmly held convictions wrapped in a thin layer of humor, harmless among monks who were sworn to each other for life—at times returned to haunt him. After just a year in office, he signalled that his romance

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with the new Pope was over, describing John Paul II as a "ham actor" whose pronouncements "do not always make sense, unless you dramatize them." The Pope, he said, was "very Polish and very stubborn," and "when he's made up his mind, keep quiet!" Milwaukee, of course, has a large Polish community, and local Polish leaders were incensed, accusing Weakland of ethnic insensitivity. (Weakland invited them to the chancery and played a complete tape recording of his remarks, which had also included ample praise of the Pontiff, and the storm soon passed.) Later, as pedophilia among priests was drawing increased attention, he was quoted as saying that not all victims of sexual abuse are unwitting innocents. But his gaffes, while major, were outweighed by his performance. He adroitly instituted change in archdiocesan affairs, placing women in senior positions, streamlining the bureaucracy, assuring pensions for lay employees and higher pay for teachers, establishing a program of spiritual renewal for parishes, and mandating that each parish have a lay council. He bore witness to his concern for social justice by having dinner with the city's poor and with ex-priests and their wives, by providing sanctuary for Salvadoran refugees, by protesting police brutality against blacks, by calling for civil rights for homosexuals, and by instituting post-abortion counselling. His activities soon began to attract national attention, and Milwaukee's innovative policies became boilerplate for other dioceses. (If American Catholics could vote on sainthood, the one administrative change that would likely earn Weakland this honor was his combining of the invariable Sunday "second collections" into semiannual appeals by mail.)

Along the way, he made some serious enemies among the New Right, and many of them are still working hard for his removal. There were also those in Milwaukee who found his decisive nature tactless and unfeeling. When he was reorganizing the archdiocese, he called his staff together just before Christmas and told them with great enthusiasm how wonderfully the new system would work—this despite the fact that the reorganization would cost some of them their jobs. "He doesn't have much patience with the weaker brethren," one veteran Milwaukee priest says, and a younger

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"Well, of course it's going to end badly. For Sybil that's the whole point."

• •

priest told me that among his group Weakland is referred to as the Black Hole, explaining, "You can sit in his office and pour out the information, and it just goes in—you never know what he's thinking. And we've all heard how he was sent all over—Rome, New York—to be trained. Are there no Milwaukee priests who deserve the same opportunities? Among the hundreds and hundreds of us, is there only one brilliant Rembert?" Weakland is nevertheless enormously popular among his priests; a recent survey revealed that he has a ninety-per-cent acceptance rate among them.

After a rocky start, the former primate found that the running of an archdiocese could be at once interesting and substantially delegated. He developed friends, among both the priests and the laypeople of Milwaukee, and a cultural life that includes the Milwaukee Symphony and Chicago's Lyric Opera. He discovered a certain natural rhythm to his prayer life—often a silent hesitation before a meeting or conference or liturgical function, when, articulated or not, the message sent heavenward is: What do You want of this? He grew into his role, and found that his life need not be limited by the geographical confines of his diocese, or his mind enclosed by the dogmatic boundaries set in Rome.

While most of his callers and their concerns are local, it is not uncommon for the Archbishop to receive national and international figures, who come to talk—and often to disagree with him—about broader issues. Such a meeting took place in June of 1984, when a draft of the pastoral letter entitled "Economic Justice for All," of which Archbishop Weakland was the principal architect, had barely begun to circulate. The letter had been commissioned by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and examined the impact of Catholic social teaching on the American economic system and how that system, in turn, influences the way Catholics live their lives and express their faith. The draft drew the ire not only of the Reagan-era free-marketeers outside the Church but also of a broad spectrum of Catholics, because of its call for government intervention to reduce economic disparities, for a general "preferential option for the poor," and for greater funding of welfare programs, job training, and education. The letter took pains not to castigate the capitalist system, and it was based on a nearly hundred-year-old tradition of papal encyclicals on social justice, but the Catholic audience is no longer made up only of immigrants and blue-collar workers eager to have their burden eased. Increasingly, it consists of members of the middle and upper classes, who fear that their hard-won affluence will be diminished if the less fortunate in their midst are to be helped.

"I looked out the window," the Archbishop said, remembering the day that the group of influential neo-conservative Catholics was scheduled to arrive, "and up pulled these limousines with smoked windows, having whisked the occupants in from their private planes, which had landed minutes before at the Milwaukee airport. All I could think of was that it looked very much like a meeting of high-level Mafia leaders." His visitors—including the industrialist J. Peter Grace, former Treasury Secretary William Simon, and Michael Novak, a senior analyst at a conservative think tank—filed into his office, ready to launch a preëmptive strike before the draft could circulate any farther. They were ushered by the Archbishop into his adjoining conference room. While Weakland can be a patient listener for that "one small voice," and a fool for Christ, he is not simply a fool. "I sat not at the end of the table, where I customarily do, but on the side, with my back to the wall—a wall covered with pictures of me with each of the Popes of recent times, and with famous churchmen like Karl Rahner, Dom Helder Câmara, and Cardinals Suenens, Willebrands, and Hume," he recalled. "I wanted these loyal sons of the Church to see some of the people I've hung out with. I listened patiently to their side, and granted that I might be called a socialist for what I was saying. And then I tried to give them my view that the Church has to insert itself in the national debate or else risk finding itself declared—properly—irrelevant. Vatican II clearly restated that the free-market economy is not the be-all and end-all. And the preferential option for the poor is Scripturally based. The problem is that the preferential option has been around for so long that we have stopped looking at it. Why? Because our religion has become a civil religion, instead of the prophetic faith that calls out not for rugged individualism but for us to share what we have. As gently as I could, I said that there would be a cost to upsetting our civil religion. That we could believe in capitalism and yet be critical of its excesses. That paying attention to the common good does not necessarily mean lapsing into collectivism, Communism—those scary words."

The pastoral letter on the economy was overwhelmingly approved at the 1986 N.C.C.B. meeting, and provided

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Archbishop Weakland with his first national exposure. He went to Wall Street and advised a group of four hundred brokers and investment bankers to "look at the bad effects of the system, and how those human costs can be minimized or reduced, if not done away with." He addressed the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, saying that "economic policies cannot be left solely to technicians, special-interest groups, and market forces" but that government must intervene, to provide "full employment . . . the foundation of a just economy." The N.C.C.B. letter is cited extensively throughout the Church—in catechetical materials, speeches, and homilies—and also by those (Catholics and non-Catholics alike) who want to lend a moral or Biblical dimension to their testimony on economic issues before congressional or state-legislature committees. Pope John Paul II's recent encyclical, "Centesimus Annus" (issued to commemorate the centennial of "Rerum Novarum," Pope Leo XIII's disquisition on the fundamental rights of labor in a free-enterprise system), also takes up the subject of capitalism, extolling its virtues but warning against its abuses; the bishops' pastoral letter is deemed to be not only more complete in its analysis of thorny economic issues but more Scriptural and pastoral in spirit.

Occasionally in our conversations, the Archbishop referred to his differences with the Vatican during his years in Milwaukee, speaking of these episodes not as examples of his courage under fire but as burdens he had not sought to take up. One such event stood out in his mind as emblematic of his frustration. This was a synod held in Rome in 1987; the topic was the role of the laity. After years of grass-roots consultations, bishops from around the world had assembled in Rome with their position papers in hand, and the sentiment of their people on their minds, to discuss how much the laity, in a Church that had traditionally entrusted the dominant roles to clergy, should be allowed and expected to do. At the synod, Archbishop Weakland spoke plainly on the function of women in the Church. "Women who are loyal to and love the Church express dismay and discouragement if their talents and contributions to Church life are stifled or rejected," he said. "They want Church leaders to treat them as Jesus treated women. . . . Women in the Gospels ministered to, with, and for Jesus." The Archbishop went on to advocate that women be allowed to assume all liturgical roles not requiring ordination, and that they be considered for openings in the Curia and the Vatican diplomatic corps.

"The consultation process beforehand took years," he told me. "Hundreds of thousands of people participated, in thousands of discussions, and many hundreds of documents were prepared, and the end result was so disappointing. After it was over, the Pope issued a statement, and, while it was not a bad statement, it really didn't go any further than what had already been said at Vatican II about the role of women in the Church. Who knows who subverts the process. The Pope? The Curia? But the Pope's document could have been written without the synod—without any of those extensive consultations. *Roma locuta est, causa finita est.* I vowed I would never go through such a charade again."

Rome has spoken, the case is closed; but this was Milwaukee, and this shepherd on the shores of Lake Michigan, far from the Tiber, had to continue to address the needs of his flock. One of his current concerns was a possible grim future of priestless parishes. Rome was clear on this point: the solution was prayer for more vocations; there would be no exceptions to a celibate male clergy; the shortage would pass. This did not satisfy Weakland, and for some time he had been mulling over the writing of a pastoral letter to the people of his archdiocese on the clerical crisis. Now he was beginning to see how it should be broken down. There would be three parts, the first two of which—with Scripture and Church tradition strategically employed—would lay out the problem. Part I would deal with the nature of the parish, Part II with the role of the priest. About Part III he was less certain, but he knew that what he had in mind to say could easily bring down the wrath of Rome. He needed time to think about it, and he set himself a deadline, so he would not indefinitely put off a difficult but necessary task. He decided to have a draft of the letter completed before he left Milwaukee, in early November, on the trip that

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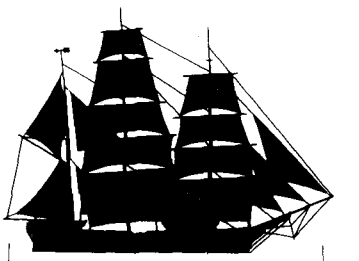

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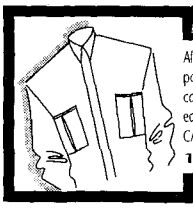

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would take him to Washington for the N.C.C.B. meeting, to Fribourg to accept the degree, and then on to El Salvador.

Archbishop Weakland has another, deeper medium by which to reach his people: the Mass. Catholicism is a liturgically based religion, and the Mass—in which Christ is sacramentally present in the Eucharist—is at its core. Masses are key events to gather the Milwaukee faithful, either those united by parish lines or those brought together by social or political concerns, and Archbishop Weakland uses such occasions for teaching, which he sees as a prelate's primary responsibility. Some within his archdiocese are open to his words; others regard him with profound distrust. Two such Masses, both held the same week in mid-October, particularly demonstrated for me the range of sentiment in the archdiocese.

One was a Children's Mass at Our Lady Queen of Peace, a church in a predominantly Polish section of Milwaukee's South Side. The church was built in 1988, in a starkly modern, modified Spanish-mission style. Its stained-glass windows, after a nod to the Old Testament (Moses), march triumphantly and with a certain ethnic bias through twenty centuries of Christianity (St. Peter; St. Adalbert, who is said to have brought Christianity to Poland, in the tenth century; Elizabeth Ann Seton, America's first native-born saint; and St. Maximilian Kolbe, who died in a Polish concentration camp) before boldly speculating on the twenty-first (John Paul II, who is both Polish and very much alive). Before Mass, the pastor and his associate chatted easily and amicably with the Archbishop as they vested in the sacristy. Even the altar boys seemed relaxed with him. One of them, a seventh grader named Jacob, was bemoaning the recent forced removal of a long lock of hair at the back of his head. "They call it a fag wag," he explained.

The Archbishop asked what that meant, and Jacob looked at him innocently and said, "I don't know. Just that I had to cut it off. Principal said so. We have rules. Can't have anything that calls attention to you."

"Hair," the Archbishop sighed. "See this skullcap? When I had enough hair, I had little combs inside to keep it on. One day, I put on the mitre—this big, stiff red hat I wear—a little crookedly and dug the combs right into my scalp. Ouch! Blood! Those days are over. Now the skullcap keeps slipping. Are you guys good basketball players? You might have to catch the mitre if it falls off."

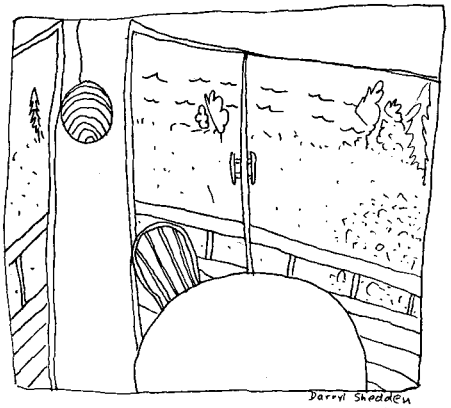
When the Archbishop neared the altar and was about to greet his congregation—some three hundred schoolchildren, the girls dressed in white blouses and plaid jumpers, the boys in dark trousers and pale-blue shirts—he was given a bouquet of yellow roses and a huge wall hanging of a rainbow drawn by the children and signed by all of them. After a short opening monologue on the symbolism of his ring, mitre, and shepherd's crook ("It's a cane, but with a hook on the end to rescue any of you little sheep that go astray"), he segued gracefully into the liturgy: "O.K. Let's begin Mass. Peace be with you. Now just relax, and ask God for all the graces you're going to need to be good today."

His homily began with a question: "How many of you have ever said, to your mom or dad, 'I love you—I think you're nice'?"

A full show of hands.

"Well, when you say it to God, what is that? Exactly. Prayer. That's what praying is, telling God He's nice. When you say 'Thank you, God' for something nice, that's praying, too. Now, let's see. You thank Him for . . . Hmmm. Ninja Turtles? Right! For homework? Nooo!"

The children, their broad Slavic faces smiling through much of the Mass, were a gratifyingly responsive group, obviously amazed and pleased that this towering personage, a majestic seven and a half feet tall in his red mitre, could be so plainspoken. At the Our Father, their pre-adolescent voices filled the church, and I found myself thinking that American Catholicism, with all its conflicts, vagaries, and shortcomings, with schools and parishes closing around the country, seemed strong and fruitful that morning at Queen of Peace.



The other Mass that week came complete with a title—"Respect Life: A Liturgical Celebration." It was held in the evening, in one of the archdiocese's wealthiest parishes, St. Jude the Apostle, in Wauwatosa. The Archbishop arrived at the rectory at five-thirty, in order to allow an hour between the planned dinner and the seven-thirty Mass—a fast required before the reception of Holy Eucharist. During dinner, the conversation with the pastor, Father Donald Weber, veered haltingly from one ecclesiastical subject to another, and painfully lacked the spontaneity of the Archbishop's visit to Queen of Peace. Father Weber spoke of his trip to Spain the preceding summer, and how impressed he had been by the shrine of the Virgin Mary built there by Opus Dei, an ultraconservative lay and clerical religious society. The Archbishop smiled politely and offered a comment on the art of El Greco. Father Weber then noted with pride that his collection of relics continued to grow. In the room where the Archbishop later vested was a huge glass case containing two hundred and nineteen relics considered "first class"—bone fragments from a broad panoply of known and unknown Catholic saints. The Archbishop seemed not to notice the formidable presence of these holy particles. While he waited in the vestibule of the church for the procession to the altar, he was noticeably quiet, his gaze wandering over the magnificently plumed hats of the Knights of Columbus, who were to be his honor guard. Though he usually trades small talk with those in attendance at such functions, the Archbishop did not do so on this night; he returned the greetings and the proffered smiles but stood stiffly off to one side, an uncharacteristically frozen look on his face. When, finally, he reached the altar of the cavernous church, the Archbishop was almost lost to the eye before huge philodendrons and an ornate floor-to-ceiling mosaic framed in brass. Turning to face the congregation, he could see that the church was only half full. There were perhaps three hundred and fifty people in the pews. Two of them were reporters—Marie Rohde, from the Milwaukee *Journal*, and Mary Beth Murphy,

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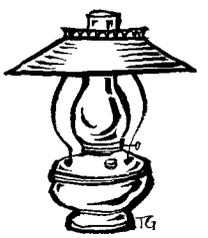
from the *Sentinel*—who were there on assignment.

This was no ordinary evening Mass. It was the annual liturgical celebration held by the archdiocese's anti-abortion group. The sparse turnout could have been interpreted as a measure of the group's antipathy toward its archbishop, for this was normally a well-attended event. Early the previous spring, as some bishops were threatening excommunication of politicians who supported a woman's right to an abortion and also of those working in abortion clinics—a threat actually carried out by Bishop Rene Gracida, of Corpus Christi, Texas, who excommunicated a clinic director and a clinic physician—Archbishop Weakland had taken another tack. He held six "listening sessions," in which Catholic women in Milwaukee were invited to air their views on the Church's stand on abortion. Catholic anti-abortion activists were enraged by this approach but temporarily held their fire. A few months later, in two long articles published in the archdiocesan newspaper, the Archbishop summed up and responded to what he had heard. Weakland wrote that while the women at the sessions saw abortion as a tragedy, they found the tactics of the pro-life movement "ugly and demeaning." Alluding to the common practice of handing out pictures of aborted fetuses, and the (less common) bombing of abortion clinics, the Archbishop wrote, "Many dislike the narrowness of so many in the pro-life movement, their tactics . . . their lack of compassion . . . their lack of civility," and he recommended that politicians unwilling to call for a ban on abortions be given "as much latitude as reason permits." As for the Church's ban on artificial means of birth control, a subject that had come up repeatedly during the listening sessions, he noted that "I did not sense that there was much support" for it.



The vast majority of Catholic priests and bishops are against abortion on demand, but few have lent their active support to the pro-life movement. Weakland was alone, however, in confronting its virulence head on. After his two articles appeared, the newspaper headlines—the *Sentinel's* was "WEAKLAND: PRO-CHOICE COULD BE OK"—took some liberties with his actual stand, and the Archbishop was once more a national figure. While many applauded him, he quickly became the target of hate mail more rancorous and voluminous than any he had ever before received. The economic pastoral had brought hundreds of letters; these articles evoked thousands. He was called "butcher," "killer," "slaughterer," "murderer," and various unprintable names. The Catholic Center, which is a Washington-based group founded by Paul Weyrich, the tireless advocate of far-right causes, drew a parallel between Weakland and a German bishop who in 1933 became a member of the S.S. and "the apologist for Nazism among German Catholics," and it began a campaign to collect a hundred thousand signatures on a petition to the Apostolic pro-nuncio demanding that Weakland be disciplined.

That night at St. Jude's in Wauwatosa, Weakland's gestures during his homily were more expansive and nervous than usual, but his words were carefully chosen. "The dignity of every person is built in," he said. "Before birth, after birth, right to the last moment before death. The presumption is always in favor of life . . . so while civil authorities may say that capital punishment is allowable, we say that any taking of life is brutal, is wrong." Threads of the just-war theory, poverty, racism, social injustice were woven into a seamless cloth. He would not be drawn into addressing the single issue that his audience wanted him to discuss; instead, he offered an overarching argument for "a consistent life ethic." The word "abortion" never passed his lips. At the reception that followed, in the church hall, the Archbishop looked plainly exhausted by his attempts to walk such a fine line. He tried, and failed, to sustain small talk. On returning to his car, he found a flyer from a Philadelphia-based right-to-life group on the windshield in which, had he read it, he would have learned that he was a man who "abandons unborn children by rendering them invisible."

He sat quietly in the darkness of the back seat on the return trip to St. John's, and it was only when he mounted the stairs on the way to his rooms that he commented on the evening. "Such a difficult group to preach to," he said. "Such hard faces. Such surety. No smiles. No openness

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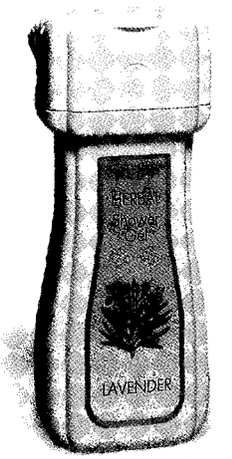

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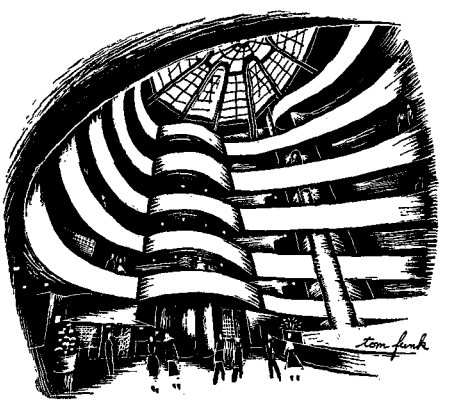
to any other point of view. But I really didn't handle it well. Too rhetorical. I wasn't well enough prepared, hadn't thought it out. They are a minority, they feel rejected. They have no joy in being Catholic or part of a Church. And there was a teaching moment. Missed." He flicked on the light. The smile came back, albeit wan and worn. "But you know what they really needed?" he asked. His look was at once mischievous and grandfatherly. "A laxative. And a hug."

ON another evening that October, I arrived at the Archbishop's rooms in the cathedral rectory to be greeted by Maria Callas's 1955 performance of "La Sonnambula," at La Scala, which was wafting into the study from his living room. "Her finest period," he said, and noted with blissful reverie and a touch of pride that he had heard her sing the work there. "That little 'action' I was thinking of might have to wait a bit," he continued, referring to the potentially troublesome third part of the pastoral letter addressing the shortage of priests. Professor Holderegger had phoned him from Fribourg to say that there had been an unforeseen hitch in the planned conferral of the honorary degree: the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education, which oversees ecclesiastically sanctioned schools of theology, like Fribourg's, had not yet approved Weakland's name. "And," the Archbishop added, in a tone as straightforward as it was unenthusiastic, "the new bishop of Green Bay has been named."

Although each bishop operates autonomously, dioceses in the United States are grouped into thirty-three provinces. The Wisconsin province, of which Milwaukee's archbishop is the titular head, includes the state's four other dioceses—Green Bay, La Crosse, Madison, and Superior. In this arrangement, the archbishop holds the title of metropolitan, and periodically brings together the four other diocesan bishops—called suffragans—and the four auxiliary bishops (one each in Madison and Green Bay and two in Milwaukee). While a metropolitan's recommendations for the appointment of bishops within his province, and for new bishops to be raised up from the ranks of his priests, are no more than that—the Pope reserves the right to name whomever he likes—his word is commonly held to carry a weight commensurate with his standing in Rome. New York's Cardinal John O'Connor is considered the prime bishop-maker in America, followed by Boston's Cardinal Bernard Law; Washington's Cardinal James Hickey; Cardinal John Krol, the former head of the Philadelphia archdiocese; and the two latest appointees to the College of Cardinals—Roger Mahony, of Los Angeles, and Anthony Bevilacqua, of Philadelphia. By contrast, Archbishop Weakland's suggestions for new leadership in his province have been ignored; moreover, it has been eleven years since a priest of the archdiocese of Milwaukee has been consecrated a bishop.

The process of naming bishops within the Catholic Church is a fascinating mixture of transcendent vision and politics of varying degrees of venality. Sometimes the best men are named—the brightest, or the most pastoral, or those who are beloved by fellow-clerics and by the people and are thus able to lead them most effectively. More often the choice falls on men whose views mesh with those of the current Pope, and whose allegiance can therefore be depended on. At its most venal, the process provides a reward—for, say, an American ethnic group that has raised a huge sum of money for the Vatican and expects to see the purple zucchetto on the head of one of its own, or for an Italian family with centuries of ties to the papacy. In the past, concordats or other agreements with several countries have stipulated that the Vatican would allow them a voice in choosing their bishops. America's first bishop, John Carroll, was elected by his fellow-priests, in 1789, and up until the First Vatican Council, in 1869-70—a gathering that declared the doctrine of papal infallibility, thus consolidating Rome's power—local churches, and even civil authorities, had significant input. But the days of such modest participation are over. The current Pope appoints his own choices, acknowledging but often disregarding local sentiment, and unfettered by checks and balances. So much power in the naming of members of the Catholic hierarchy has never been wielded before.



The new man for the diocese of Green Bay was Bishop Robert Banks, a sixty-two-year-old auxiliary in Boston, who had worked closely with Cardinal Law. When his appointment was made official, the Milwaukee *Journal* called it "a papal slap in the face" for Weakland. The Archbishop brushed this off as "journalism," but if it was not a slap in the face it was surely one on the wrist. Banks had the reputation of being conservative in matters of dogma—he and Law had recently led an anti-abortion march in Boston—and his appointment was viewed both in the local papers and in the national Catholic press as an antidote to the progressivism that Weakland had come to espouse. Weakland's statement to the press skirted the issue, extolling the people, not the appointee: "He will find the Church here a vibrant one. In particular, he will see that his own diocese of Green Bay is full of devout Catholics, eager for enlightened leadership." Privately, the Archbishop's views were considerably less complacent. He feared that the appointment would cause a severe morale problem among the Green Bay priests, who had been serving under one of their own—Auxiliary Bishop Robert Morneau—since June, when Green Bay's former bishop, Adam Maida, was named the archbishop of Detroit. Morneau had been the unanimous choice of Weakland and the other Wisconsin-province bishops, and it was Morneau's name they had sent to the Vatican by way of the nuncio, who may well have tabled it.

The "unforeseen hitch" complicating the Fribourg honorary degree looked like another Vatican slap, yet Weakland showed no disappointment or anger over either development. The Vatican was holding up what is usually pro-forma approval, and someone viewed as a consecrated carpetbagger—something of a Vatican mole—was being planted in his province; nevertheless, the Archbishop went on with his work, with no more than an occasional mention of either apparent slight. Four

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priests had recently sent letters of resignation to the chancery; alcohol, a woman, bitterness with the Church, and mental illness had respectively overcome their callings. A parish with no future was asking for twenty thousand dollars to keep it functioning. The archdiocesan director of the Respect Life Office had resigned, saying that she could no longer "perpetuate the myth" that the archdiocese was committed to anti-abortion efforts. Pastoral associates—in many cases nuns, who are called upon to perform non-sacramental functions such as sick calls, catechetical instruction, and pre-marriage counselling—were being appointed by pastors to help ease the burden on parish priests; yet there was no established procedure to oversee their qualifications or to exercise control over where they were appointed. Housekeepers have been known to follow a pastor through a succession of parish assignments like surrogate wives, and Weakland did not want this new class of associates to begin such a pattern.

As for matters of more personal concern, the Little Eucharistic Lamb had called the Archbishop one evening at the cathedral rectory, having somehow obtained his private number. She said that she was in a phone booth across the street and had seen his car return to the garage; she had then waited to see the lights go on in his rooms. She pressed the Archbishop to perform an exorcism, saying that she was in continuous, excruciating pain. She had just seen the movie "Dick Tracy," she said, in which she had detected a plot to assassinate the Pope. She went on to link a character in it named Eighty-eight Keys with a bishop of "the dissident church." This bishop, she said, was a dangerous man, and might be involved in the assassination plot. It was probably just a coincidence, but Weakland had been nicknamed Eighty-eight Keys during his seminary days, because of his proficiency at the piano. The Lamb had also begun to attend the Archbishop's Sunday-morning Mass. On the advice of the psychologist leading the evaluation team that was trying to schedule an interview with the woman, the Archbishop had hired two plainclothes female guards from a private security agency, and directed them to sit in the pew behind her to prevent any disruptive action on her part.

Perhaps most disturbing was a phone call from Eileen Purcell, the executive director of the SHARE Foundation, which was coördinating the forthcoming El Salvador trip. She informed the Archbishop that one of the rural communities they were to visit had been the scene of an ambush a few days earlier. Father Jon de Cortina, a colleague of the six Jesuits killed by Salvadoran Army soldiers the previous November, had been held down for an hour and a half by sniper fire. One bullet had passed through the roof of his car, and another had hit the doorframe inches from his face, before he was able to get out and run for cover. Some forty-five shots in all had been fired. The Archbishop asked whether it was just a scare tactic or whether the snipers had meant to kill Father Cortina. It was not just a scare tactic, Purcell replied. But the trip was still on.

ON a Tuesday, the Archbishop's day off, we took a stroll by Lake Michigan, which is a leisurely ten-minute walk from the rectory. It was an unseasonably warm day, and Weakland was dressed in a beige cardigan, a green-plaid sports shirt, and tan slacks—an outfit that made him look more like a banker or an insurance agent in early retirement than like an archbishop.

"Let's talk about this Church of ours," he said, sitting down on one of the benches overlooking the lake. "But first let's back up a bit—two Popes and two nuncios ago—to trace why Weakland is held in such high regard by our friends in Rome. I was appointed in 1977 by Pope Paul VI, in the aftermath of Vatican II—its reverberations were still being felt, though it had ended twelve years before. Pope John XXIII had been warned that chaos follows councils—and that was indeed true for the council he called and, sadly, did not live long enough to see completed. But the feeling within at least some parts of the Vatican—and certainly with Paul VI, who succeeded John XXIII—was that the changes were for the best. A Church more responsive to modern needs was emerging. At the time, the Apostolic delegate in America was Archbishop Jean Jadot, and Jadot was looking for priests and auxiliaries who would be the most effective—and this is important—*pastors*. Not administrators or theologians or canonists but pastors. Bishops

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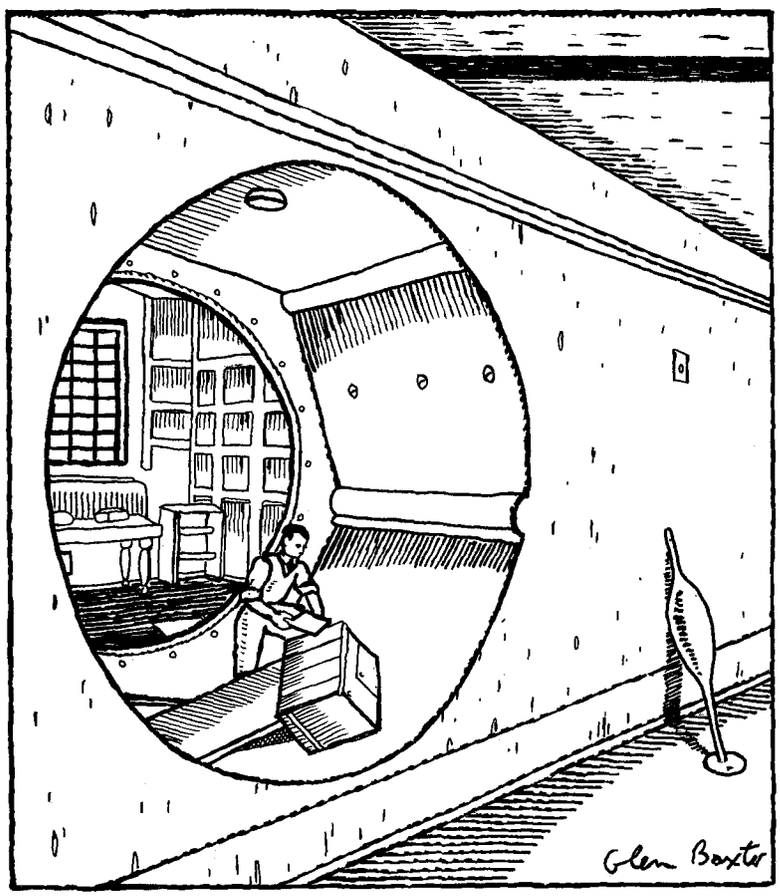
throughout America knew that Jadot would listen to them and would forward their requests to Rome. So we saw a wonderful flowering of open, pastoral, and, by the way, popular men: Howard Hubbard to Albany, Matt Clark to Rochester, William Borders to Baltimore, Anthony Pilla to Cleveland, Walter Sullivan to Richmond.

"Paul VI died the year after I was appointed. John Paul I lived for only a month or so after his election, and then our current Pope, John Paul II, was elected. It was a brilliant choice—this man from an Iron Curtain country—and I was very enthusiastic about what he would do. John Paul II knew what it was like to live under oppression, and so he brought to office a certain toughness and a desire for discipline—things that keep people together when they are forced to tolerate an oppressive political system. He felt that the Church had gone too far, and, basically, he was right. It was time to slow things down, absorb the changes, see what was working and what was not. He is a strong man, with definite ideas, and he felt that he needed to take control of a rudderless ship.

"He looked to America and found that all these popular, pastoral bishops, appointed before his time, were going off in various directions and were not in step with Rome. The American conference of bishops had begun to practice the principles that we are used to in a democratic society. But the Church is not a democratic institution, and the Pope wanted to restore control to the Vatican. The Popes who had appointed these pastoral bishops were dead. Jadot, the man who had recommended many of them, was still the nuncio, but his judgment was no longer trusted. He was soon replaced by Archbishop Pio Laghi, whose judgment the Pope could trust. Laghi's mandate was to find men for the hierarchy who would put the Church back on track—men who would listen to and be obedient to Rome. As for Jadot, his reward was a low-level job in the Vatican. Although every American nuncio before him had eventually been made a cardinal, he was not.

"When it became apparent to me what the years under John Paul II would be like, I didn't sit down and line up any master plan of confrontation for the next few decades. That was Rome; I was Milwaukee. I had my own work to do, and, just as I had done as abbot and then as primate, I simply went about my business, listening to what people were saying, watching the tide of human events. But if you are the least bit sensitive to what is happening around you, and a situation presents itself that is not right, you have to do your best to say or do something about it. Regardless of whom it pleases or displeases. Take the appointment of Dick Sklba. The Wisconsin province had recommended Father Richard Sklba as an auxiliary bishop for the Milwaukee archdiocese, and in 1979 the word came down that he was about to be named. The priests of Milwaukee were ecstatic. Everybody loved Sklba, both as a priest and as the rector of our seminary. Then, between the time of the announcement and the date of his consecration, I got a phone call: the Vatican was going to cancel the appointment. Not long before, Sklba had chaired a Catholic Biblical Association committee that was charged with examining whether Holy Scripture precluded the ordination of women. In his rather lengthy report was a line or two stating that Scripture in fact did not preclude women priests, and pointing out that the fact that the Apostles were all men couldn't in itself be used to defend an all-male clergy. He in no way advocated the ordination of women; he merely rendered his scholarly judgment on various recurrent arguments. And because of this the Vatican was going to undo him.

"I couldn't let this happen. Should a line or two in a document that really didn't go very far be allowed to ruin a man's life? I called Rome and told them that Dick and I were coming over and wanted to see the Pope. When we got there, Cardinal Casaroli, his secretary of state, said that I was too angry and the Pope was too angry for a meeting to do any good. Instead, he asked us to draft some sort of statement, acceptable to the Pope, that would in essence have Sklba back down from his position. We drafted something—not a backing down but an attempt to put Sklba's statement in the context of Church teaching—and the word came back that the Pope said no. We drafted another statement and waited. Dick was to be consecrated on a Wednesday in Milwaukee; it was now Saturday in Rome, and we had a Sunday-morning flight home. Finally, late Saturday



KENNETH PREFERRED TO REMAIN INDOORS, WORKING ON HIS PRONOUNS.

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night, we got word that the Pope had approved, but with the stipulation that the statement appear in the Milwaukee papers on Tuesday, the day before Sklba's consecration. Well, the papers not only didn't play the statement as Sklba backing down but gave it the angle that he stood behind what he had originally written. We sent the articles on to Rome, but, fortunately, it being the pre-fax era, they didn't arrive in time for Rome to respond. So, while Sklba's career was certainly stalemated right off the bat, he was consecrated a bishop.

"That incident, obviously, made Rome distrustful of me. And I imagine that other stands I have taken—from advocating a fuller role for women in the Church to what I have said about abortion—do not correspond with what the Vatican wants put forward. On the abortion issue: Can you, as a Catholic, be personally against abortion, yet, as an elected representative or private citizen, allow abortions to be done? That is a very big question for me, and, frankly, one for which I still don't have an answer. But I do know that you cannot take away a person's right to make a wrong decision. There may be a Church ideal—an ideal that we would like everyone to live up to—but my job is to funnel down what comes from the Vatican and find out what Joe Blow in front of me needs in order to survive, what can reasonably be asked of him. This is what being pastoral is about."

A jogger thumped past as we sat by the lake, and he and the Archbishop exchanged waves. It was a brilliantly clear and windy day. Inside the breakwater, huge cargo ships stood at anchor, awaiting berthing space in the Port of Milwaukee, while the few sailboat captains brave enough to face the choppy waters found themselves heeled over to the gunwales. Toward the west, the not very imposing Milwaukee skyline broke the horizon.

"Again let me say I *agree* with the Pope—things *have* gone too far," the Archbishop continued after a moment. "But his position of either-or, clamping down on dissent wherever he senses it, doesn't really clarify or help. I believe in a both-and Church. There is a natural tension built into Christianity. The Church has always struggled to preserve the purity of the Gospel in the light of a changing world. It is the age-old struggle to combine human truth—wherever it is found—with the revealed truth that comes from God. But I think history shows that we need not fear new thoughts or new discoveries. In the early days of the Church, when the Gospel, which was born into an earthy, Jewish culture, had to face the Hellenistic, or neo-Platonic, dualistic thinking, it finally evolved a deeper vision of this world, where salvation is worked out in relation to the next. In the fifth century, this thinking culminated in Augustine, who—afraid to accept what seemed to him the merely human in art and knowledge—created the thesis of two separate 'cities.' It seemed like a perfect vision, and it lasted for centuries in the West. But, in the thirteenth century, theologians like St. Thomas Aquinas—who, by the way, was considered a heretic in his time—had to face the new influences of Aristotelian thinking that had reached the West through the Arabic philosophers, like Averroës and Avicenna. Out of that challenge came the idea that the supernatural is really built on the natural, and doesn't deny it. *Nihil humanum mihi alienum est.* 'Nothing human is foreign to me.' The Renaissance brought a new humanism, putting the accent on the human body. The Church, aghast at first, absorbed this new art, in its Raphael, its Michelangelo, even its Titian and Tintoretto. The Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, with its accent on human reason, posed special problems for the Church. The Enlightenment terrified the Church with the revolutionary idea that there could be double truths—opposed, but each true. Rousseau, Locke, Hobbes posited that problems could be solved by human reason, and reason became a god in itself. Science blossomed. And God's mysterious ways were explained away by reason and by science. Galileo's contention that the earth revolved around the sun, which contradicted the first chapter of Genesis—was that

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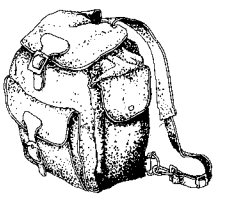

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worthy of excommunication? Now we can see that the two are not contradictory. Darwin and the origin of species, Freud and the workings of the psyche? If there is truth, it will win out and be integrated into the revealed. If an idea is false, it will fall away. It makes no sense to do battle with new ideas just because they don't seem to fit neat little categories that might have been codified by some council hundreds of years ago.

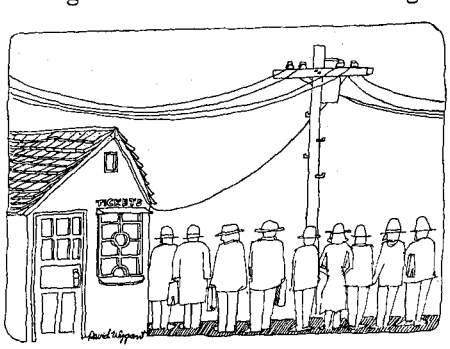
"But the glory of the Church is that it does eventually accept and grow. Ideas from the Enlightenment gradually entered into the Church's thinking. For example, when Pope Leo XIII published 'Rerum Novarum,' in 1891, he relied as much on the theories of individual rights of a Locke as he did on the common-good concepts of an Aquinas. The Second Vatican Council, in documents like 'Dignitatis Humanae'—written in consultation with the American theologian John Courtney Murray—came to terms with the Enlightenment and proclaimed the importance of the individual conscience in religion. 'Dignitatis Humanae' stated that one's conscience is inviolable and that no one should be forced to worship against his conscience. It is an incredible document. But, ah . . ." The Archbishop paused.

I was glad of the respite: Weakland's journey through Church, philosophical, and scientific history had flowed without hesitation for the past twenty minutes, and I had been struggling to take it all in.

"The issues today?" he went on. "Sexuality—that's the big one. We haven't come to terms with it at all. Our scientific understanding is still rudimentary. Normal sexual drives, homosexuality, pedophilia. Contraception—the fact that science can control or modify human reproduction. It is a great and frightening frontier, the Galileo issue of our day. And the Church is reluctant to accept the results of the human sciences; instead, it harks back to the days when you could say, 'This is black, this is white; this right, this wrong.' Another challenge we face is the dialectic between what we as Catholics believe and what we practice, and the decision about what of our moral code should be incorporated into the legal code. This is especially relevant in America, because we are the first generation of Catholics to be in the mainstream here. What are we asking our society to do?

"For me personally, the most interesting and difficult area has to do with relationships—that very tired word. The early asceticism of the Church—asceticism that I was brought up in and practiced—was about domesticating yourself, getting control of yourself. We were soldiers fighting under a banner, and mutual support was the key to reaching a higher good. For a person like me—a control person, who likes things measured, predictable—it was great. But the world has changed. This age is asking us to relate to each other and not only to that safe banner—to make sacrifices not only for the cause but for each other. In essence, we are being asked to let things get out of control. This is the new asceticism: living with imperfection. And, believe me, it is harder than wearing hair shirts and spending hours on your knees in prayer. Especially for me, God knows.

"But I have made the decision that I cannot control the world around me, and I'm trying very hard to live with that in myself and in my Church. And perhaps it's what gives me a certain detachment about what is going on. Because, after all, these are exciting days—somewhat like the golden age of the fifth-century Church, when people were excited about religion, and it was constantly debated in the public forum. I believe you can remain faithful to the Church while continually challenging it. If the Fribourg degree is denied—that's such a pitifully small matter. Who will be the poorer for it, me or the Curia? Yes, I'm sure they are thinking up ways to keep me in line, to criticize me, isolate me. I would do the same thing to someone who was causing me problems. Nobody likes someone standing up to him and challenging what he says. I surely don't. So my career is over. I will die the Archbishop of Milwaukee. Nothing wrong with that at all. But to get worked up over something like Fribourg, to feel bad about it? To look over my shoulder and wonder if Rome will be pleased with what I say?" He shrugged, cocked his head to the side, and, bending his arms at the elbow, held up his palms to Heaven.



THREE weeks before Archbishop Weakland was to go to the N.C.C.B. meeting in Washington, he had a phone call from Rome. Father Damian Byrne, the master general of the Dominican order, which administers Fribourg's theological school, called to say that the Vatican had finally spoken, and that the answer was no. Fribourg had been denied permission to grant him a degree. Two Swiss bishops, a Swiss Benedictine abbot, and the secretary of the Swiss bishops' conference had flown to the Vatican to intercede with Archbishop Pio Laghi, whose congregation was withholding permission. Laghi told them flatly that "it would not be wise" to honor Weakland. When pressed, Laghi said that he had received "protests from a strong pro-life group in New York" concerning the Weakland degree.

The Archbishop of Milwaukee pondered what action to take, if any. He met with his two auxiliary bishops, Richard Sklba and Leo Brust. They advised him not to acquiesce but, rather, to try to clear his name with Rome. Father Roland Trauffer, the secretary of the Swiss bishops' conference, said that while he was putting no pressure on Weakland to withdraw, such a move would make life considerably easier for the Swiss Church, which was having problems with the Vatican similar to Weakland's: Rome had just appointed to the diocese of Chur a bishop who was not being accepted by the people and the priests. After this conversation, Weakland made a decision. Although his withdrawal would, as he said it, "put the shadow on my shoulders, not the Vatican's," he would remove his name from consideration.

Events moved quickly after that. The Theology Faculty of Fribourg decided that it would grant no honorary degrees at all, and drastically scaled down what was to have been a grand centennial commemoration. These actions left the Archbishop in a rather peculiar position. He knew that the American press would get wind of this latest censure of him by Rome, and he

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considered calling a few of his press contacts—Peter Steinfels, the senior correspondent on religious matters at the New York *Times;* Tom Fox, the editor of the *National Catholic Reporter;* and the religion writers for the *Journal* and the *Sentinel*—but decided against it. He did not want to be the one to point the finger at Rome. Although he had no intention of publicly divulging the information that he was receiving, on an almost daily basis, from friends in the Vatican and from the Swiss involved in the Fribourg affair (much of it was hearsay, and Vatican gossip is at once among the juiciest and the least reliable in the world), Weakland had some potentially inflammatory material. "A strong pro-life group in New York" was thought by his sources to mean—or, at least, to include—Cardinal John O'Connor. As an American whom Rome trusts, the Cardinal was a logical source of advice concerning Weakland. It was not thought that O'Connor had in any way campaigned against the degree; merely an unenthusiastic mention of Weakland's "listening sessions" on abortion could have signalled his sentiments. The hand of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was also suspected by a number of Weakland's contacts, since Weakland had voluntarily sent his two controversial articles in the *Catholic Herald* on the listening sessions to Ratzinger and his Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The Archbishop kept his counsel, but in early November the story leaked out. Ethel Gintoft, the executive editor of the *Catholic Herald*, had found out about Fribourg through the chancery grapevine, and she confronted Weakland with her knowledge. Unlike many American bishops, who use their diocesan newspapers as official mouthpieces, Weakland had given her free rein to cover and write about whatever she considered news to the people of the archdiocese. The Archbishop knew that the word would now spread quickly, so he called Steinfels, Fox, and the local reporters, and then flew to Washington. He was uneasy about the fact that the story would break as the nation's bishops were convening, but relieved that he could go directly on to El Salvador.

—Paul Wilkes

(This is the first part of a two-part article.)

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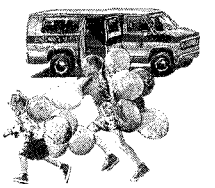

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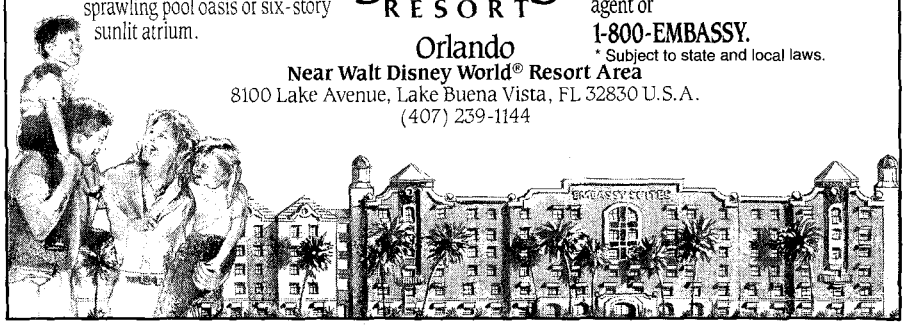

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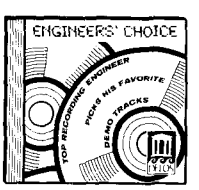

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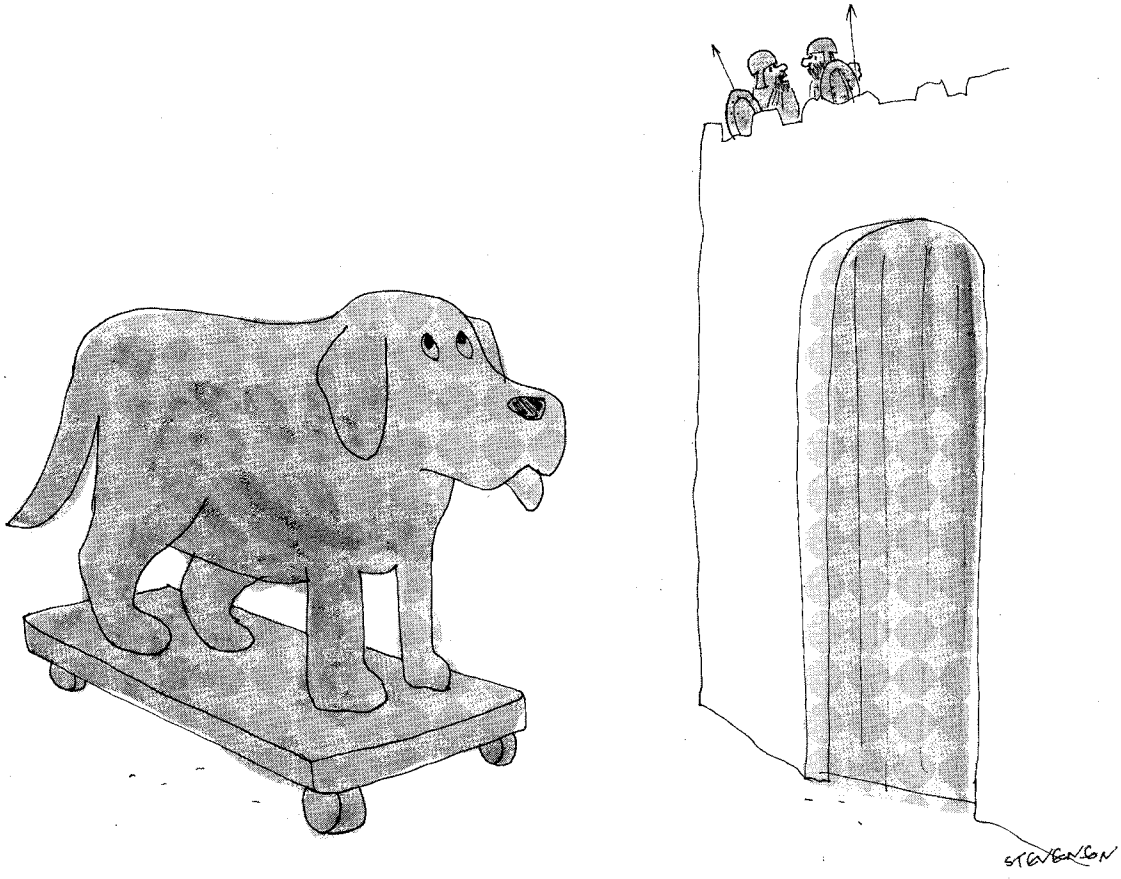
THE CURRENT CINEMA

Improvisations

"The Miracle," the beautiful new film by the Irish writer and director Neil Jordan ("Mona Lisa," "The Company of Wolves"), begins with a haunting, almost familiar melody and an enigmatic image of a woman's face floating toward us, in closeup, against the background of a milky sky. Her features are indistinct: dark glasses hide her eyes, and a shadow covers the rest of her face—a fringe across the top of the frame suggests that she's carrying a parasol. In any event, this half-lit face has a mysteriously old-fashioned, even archaic, quality. The obscurity of the image is tantalizing, alluring—an invitation to fill out our vague perceptions with sharper details, to turn these spectral traces of recognition into something known and loved. We want to imagine this woman as the heroine of an old, grand story, as a creature out of a fairy tale (a queen in exile, perhaps) or a tawdry pulp thriller (a femme fatale, a lady with a past, a night-club siren). The ravishing image fades after a minute or so, and just in time—before our tentative speculations about the woman's identity have quite hardened into formulations. Jordan leaves that face suspended in our minds, still indefinite enough to promise any kind of story, while he resolves the smaller mystery of the music that we've been trying to put a name to. It's the introductory verse of "Star Dust," maybe the most famous and beloved of all romantic pop standards. A plangent trumpet solo (by Wynton Marsalis) states the theme over a very clean and unobtrusive arrangement of strings, and we recognize it right away. The tune is so firmly embedded in our memories that most of us probably can't recall a time when we didn't know it.

As we sink into the comfortable embrace of the old song, Jordan gives us a scene to orient ourselves in: a view of a beach, with the low buildings of a small town in the background and a weathered stone wall in the foreground. Against the wall, high above the beach, the camera catches first the shadow of a human figure and then its source, an old man strolling along the promenade; and then a teen-age boy and a teen-age girl, following the old gent at a discreet distance. The teen-agers, Jimmy (Niall Byrne) and Rose (Lorraine Pilkington), speak to each other in conspiratorial tones about the drama that they imagine is taking place before them. As the old man walks by an elderly woman in a red hat, Rose intones, "Every time he passes her, her heart leaps," and Jimmy nods, admiring her skill at literary improvisation. This, we quickly realize, is how Jimmy and Rose spend most of their days—wandering through their home town, Bray, in search of people to make up stories about. It doesn't take much to stimulate their cheap-fiction reflexes. The sight of a perfectly ordinary-looking stranger eating chips in a café provides Jimmy with a flash of inspiration: "The drabness of his life was so complete as to have its own fascination." He adds, "Write it down," and Rose does. The kids seem to enjoy an ideal rapport: taking off from the human material that presents itself to them in the seaside town, they trade verbal riffs with the gleeful competitiveness of jamming musicians. In their early scenes together, these teen-agers bounce phrases and story fragments off each other with an almost magical ease, and give the movie a light, varied rhythm; they establish a groove.

Byrne and Pilkington aren't professional actors. Their gestures and readings have a fresh, unstudied quality that makes it impossible for us to find Jimmy and Rose obnoxious. The teen-agers' fiction-making game seems outrageously presumptuous, and the formulations they arrive at are often fancy and unconvincing, but the young actors manage to persuade us that Jimmy



"I think the Greeks are running out of ideas."

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and Rose aren't taking any of it too seriously—that they only half believe in the "truth" of what they make up. On some level, they seem aware that they don't yet know a whole lot about life. Besides, the object of their activity isn't really to understand the people they come upon but to impress each other: their conversations are mating dances in the guise of literary collaboration. There's a sweet, dry humor in these exchanges: we feel the pleasure that Jimmy and Rose take in their verbal play—and we feel, too, that their pleasure is freer yet thinner than it would be if they expressed it in the form of sex. Surrounded by old folks and old buildings, in a country that seems stuck in a mythic past, these young people aren't sure they want to act on the timeless impulses, to live the old story of men and women—to play the standards straight, so you can hear the melody.

Jazz musicians often speak of "telling a story" in their solos—improvising a line that's both shapely and evocative, coherent musically and emotionally. When we first see Jimmy and Rose, they haven't quite learned how to tell a story in this sense; they're just noodling, showing off their dexterity. In the way of the very young, they're proud of their facility in manipulating ideas and language; their flights of imagination are spontaneous, tossed-off, deliberately ephemeral. If there were any sweat involved in producing these inventions, the kids wouldn't enjoy them as much.

When Jimmy isn't roaming the promenade with Rose, he occasionally picks up a saxophone or sits down at a piano. His father, Sam (Donal McCann), repairs musical instruments and plays tenor sax in a group that appears nightly at a rather forlorn club: the band's book consists of hoary numbers like "Baubles, Bangles, and Beads," taken at tempos stately enough for senior citizens to dance to without fear. Jimmy has the natural talent that his father (by Sam's own admission) never had, but he never practices. Sam keeps trying to cajole his son into joining him on the bandstand; on the rare occasions when Jimmy allows himself to be persuaded, he blows a few desultory choruses and tries to get off the stage as quickly as he can. Jimmy's reluctance to do anything with his musical ability is, of course, a rebuke to his father: the prospect of surpassing the old man isn't worth the risk of becoming him. This father-son relationship is a complicated one, clouded by the absence of Jimmy's mother. Sam has told him that she's dead, and Jimmy knows nothing about who she was, because his father won't answer his questions. Jimmy hasn't the faintest idea how to feel about her. He won't assume his father's emotions toward her; he doesn't want anything secondhand.

Neil Jordan lives in Bray, and he spent part of his childhood there. This movie, his sixth, has the emotional fluency of memories that have sprung to life in a way that, finally, makes sense of them. "The Miracle" is a clear, complete vision of experience: everything we see (and hear) flows into everything else, with an unpredictable rightness. Jordan's camera moves with a kind of meditative grace, framing and reframing the characters as if to capture the most delicate momentary changes in their relationships. (The cinematographer, Philippe Rousselot, is a master of lighting and composition.) While Jordan has shown enormous talent in his previous pictures, he proves in this movie that he can tell a story in every sense. Learning to tell your own story—or, rather, learning to live the old stories as if they were your own—is the true subject of "The Miracle," the theme that ultimately rises out of the artfully arranged background. The hero's story really begins when he and Rose spot a beautiful blond woman (Beverly D'Angelo) getting off the Dublin train. She's the woman we saw in the movie's suggestive initial image, and the kids latch on to her. For once, though, they disagree on who one of their characters should turn out to be. Rose's reaction is "She's looking for something"; Jimmy prefers to think that the glamorous stranger is running away from something, a terrible secret in her past. (They're both right.) They're out of synch in a more fundamental respect, too. Rose treats this latest find with her customary nonchalance: as soon as they've come up with the usual succinct characterization, she assumes, she and Jimmy can move on to something new. But Jimmy is inclined to linger. The mature, unapproachable-looking woman in dark

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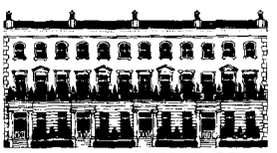

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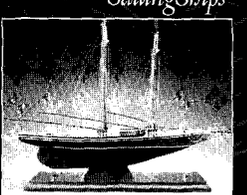

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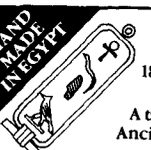

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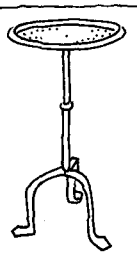

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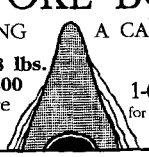

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glasses stirs him in a way he can't account for. She becomes for him an object of contemplation, even an obsession. He wants to follow her farther than the game with Rose allows, to go deeper and deeper into her story; where this woman's concerned, he can't be satisfied with a handful of deft phrases. He strikes up a conversation with her, and then pursues her, in Bray and in Dublin, with an ardor that's partly sexual and partly something else—a feeling so muddled and inchoate that he can't put a name to it. Jimmy keeps prodding this woman, who looks almost as confused as he does, to reveal her whole life to him; he seems to be acting out of an obscure sense that she can (in the words of Billie Holiday) tell him more and more, and then some.

The story she has to tell (but never quite does, not fully) is an ancient one. "The oldest," says Rose, who knows her archetypes. It's older than "Star Dust," the melody that haunts this movie: the song is played over and over again, by different people, in different settings, and expresses, with each new version, different shades of feeling. In one of the picture's most brilliant scenes, D'Angelo and Byrne perform an impromptu duet of the song at a party in a Dublin pub. She sings that unfamiliar introductory verse a cappella, and then, as she moves into the melody, Jimmy begins to accompany her on piano. She turns, startled, at the sound of his first, soft chord, but doesn't miss a beat, and the camera glides with her as she wanders back and forth between the piano and the microphone. Sometimes she's by herself in the frame, sometimes she shares it with Jimmy, and Jordan doesn't cut until their lovely performance is over. The music, the visual compositions, and the characters' emotions all seem to have come together, to have been gathered into the worn material of "Star Dust": we feel as if we'd never really heard the song before. Later, even Sam has a go at it. On a night in Bray when all the characters' stories are reaching their climax, he stands on the dance-hall stage and rips a heartfelt, powerful solo out of his horn: he produces sounds he didn't know he had in him. The last "Star Dust," played over the closing credits by the young English saxophonist Courtney Pine, is something else again: a slightly harsher-toned, more jagged version, in which a modern sense of dislocation mixes with old-fashioned romantic yearnings.

In "The Miracle" we sense the presence of a filmmaker who's on an incredible roll; every note Jordan tries for, no matter how wild, comes out pure and drops right into place. His imagery draws on some pretty outré sources: among the picture's recurring motifs are an acrobat who balances herself on one finger, a statue of a dreamy-looking Christ, a Ferris wheel, a rose, a bad stage production of "Destry Rides Again," a bunch of chattering nuns, and the inscrutable eye of a circus elephant. (Jordan might be making a little joke about Yeats' characterization of the youthful imagination; in his early work, the old poet said, he put all his circus animals on display.) There are several dream sequences, each of them brief and shocking: in one, Sam is offered the opportunity to buy his own coffin, and the salesmen won't allow him to pay in installments; in another, Jimmy watches his father burst into flames. And the movie's climax—the miracle of the title—is a daring, flamboyant gesture. It springs not from any supernatural source but from an unlikely, exhilarating convergence of nature and imagination: it's a human wonder. Jordan manages to unite everything—the florid imagery, the dark emotional undertones, the flaky comedy, the astonishing physical beauty of the Irish seacoast—into a single, unbroken mood, a smooth arc connecting the past and the present, the familiar and the unforeseen. In the final scene of "The Miracle," Jimmy and Rose stroll together on the promenade and discuss their recent experiences. On one side of them is the crumbling town; on the other is the elegant, always changing curve of the coastline. And they're surrounded by a swirl of chaotic activity: creatures of all shapes and sizes dart past them, willy-nilly. The teenagers appear serene, unfazed. They walk purposefully, as if they had found their way through the world's muddle of passions and sensations—as if they had discovered, after their separate improvisations, that they had arrived at the same place, in unexpected harmony. —Terrence Rafferty

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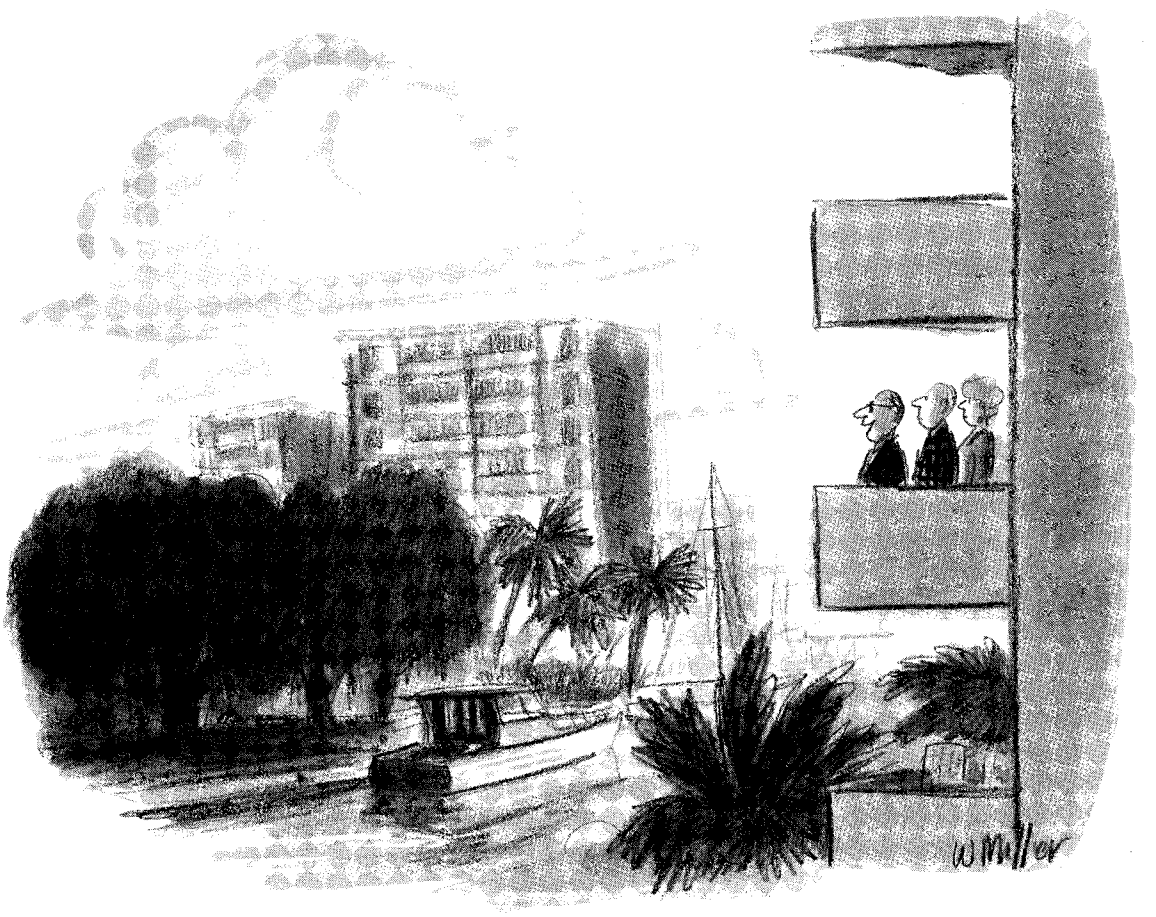
THE THEATRE

No. 18

THE Raul Julia–Christopher Walken "Othello" in Central Park—the eighteenth production in Joe Papp's ongoing Shakespeare marathon—is every bit as good as everyone said it was going to be (the advance word was very strong), and among the best Shakespeare productions I've seen at the Delacorte. Directed by Joe Dowling (late of the Abbey Theatre), it boasts a rapturous Emilia from Mary Beth Hurt; a delightful Bianca from Miriam Healy-Louie, the spirited young actress who played Juliet in the last production at Theatre for a New Audience; a charming Roderigo from Jake Weber; and an honorable Cassio from Michel Gill. All this, of course, is in addition to Mr. Walken's Iago—a part he delivers so easily and laconically that you want to take away his body mike and make him do the thing unamplified, because you know he could. What's heartening about watching Walken play Shakespeare (provided he's allowed to play what's written, which wasn't the case in Steven Berkoff's "Coriolanus") is that he manages to do something we've learned to think is impossible: find a modern idiom that is at once American and contemporary but doesn't betray the rhythm of the text. Put a Pacino or a Martin Sheen in a Shakespeare play and you will get Pacino or Martin Sheen; you won't get a marriage between the actor's acting style and the dramatic vocabulary Shakespeare used. Even the melodious-voiced Mr. Julia can do only one thing at a time: either speak the poetry or play a character. Thus, if you go to see the production in the Park you'll find that he delivers the "Her father lov'd me, oft invited me" speech beautifully but without giving you any sense of the man who charmed Desdemona and is now trying to charm her father and the Venetian senators. He's just a guy performing a speech. Mr. Walken, rare among American actors—and movie actors in general, for that matter—has the ability to be a stylist and the playwright's creation at the same time.

I saw "Othello" on the hottest night of the year—that awful Friday toward the end of June when the temperature climbed to ninety-six. That actors could perform, let alone perform creditably, in such heat (and under stage lights) was beyond me, and all the more when I saw the impossibly heavy, dark costumes Jane Greenwood had designed for a summer production. If George Morfogen's Brabantio seemed slightly less focussed than Frank Raiter's Duke of Venice, and if the members of the senate sounded at times like something out of a "Beyond the Fringe" parody, it didn't seem polite to notice. I couldn't believe the energy with which the men in the cast undertook David Leong's exciting fight sequences (perhaps too exciting: Mr. Gill was wearing a gauze eye patch). And if Kathryn Meisle, who plays Desdemona and has to wear some of the most unfortunate gowns I've seen this side of the sale rack at Victoria's Secret, failed to create the kind of life around the character that Miss Hurt did around Emilia, it may have been the heat. As for Miss Hurt, she had perhaps the heaviest, hottest costume of all and gave a beautiful performance, but then she is less human than divine.

—MIMI KRAMER



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LETTER FROM BUENOS AIRES

Daniel Capalbo listens to two radio stations at the same time, lights one cigarette with the burning stub of another, and bites his fingernails ferociously. He is a reporter, and he resembles a stock character from "The Front Page" in so many ways that one keeps looking for his fedora. The stories he has to assign and cover these days in Argentina really belong on the stage: the President won't travel without his private hairdresser and is passionately fond of driving a red Ferrari at twice the maximum legal speed; he kicked his wife out of the official residence; his sister-in-law and former appointments secretary is under investigation, for having allegedly carried suitcases crammed with cash from New York to Buenos Aires at the behest of the cocaine trade. In true Argentine fashion, Capalbo looks mournful whenever he's asked how he's doing, but the fact is that he's having the time of his life with this stuff. The early-winter sun shines here in the season's perfect blue sky, soccer stadiums fill to the top for the local championship games, as does the grand Teatro Colón, where the opera season packs the audience with solid rows of tuxedos and diamonds. Ice-cream parlors stay open past midnight. Night clubs are full of gorgeous men and kinky women. What's best, though, is to stock up on newspapers and magazines and repair to a sidewalk café to absorb the latest scandal.

There are newsstands all over the city—sometimes four to a corner. Van-size, they are papered on all sides and filled to eye level with publications: newspapers, poetry journals, specialized porn, foreign decorating magazines, a Yiddish weekly, a German daily, and even a monthly devoted to the semiotic and political analysis of local and foreign comic strips. None of these are cheap—the daily papers cost the equivalent of about seventy-five cents—and, despite the sold-out opera evenings, not all that many Argentines have cash to spare these days, but sales are brisk. Mostly the boom is due to something even the chronically gloomy *porteños*, or inhabitants of this port city, recognize as an unqualified positive achievement of the years since 1983, when the military dictatorship came to an end: before, newspapers and magazines were thick with pictures and almost devoid of information, but now people say, "With the press free, we get to find out what's going on." What's going on, at least in the media's telling of it, is breathtaking.

There has been no lack of stories since President Carlos Menem took office, two years ago, but Daniel Capalbo dates the symbolic anniversary of the scandal era to a week last July, when the magazine he was then working for, *Noticias*, ran a cover photograph of the head of the state telephone company, María Julia Alsogaray, wearing nothing more, apparently, than some draped fur and an enticing smile. The image was resonant for reasons beyond the fact that senior government officials are not supposed to appear in public in provocative states of undress. María Julia, now forty-eight, was familiar to her startled observers. Stocky, dark-haired, and invariably dressed in sombre colors, she had enjoyed for much of the last three decades a reputation not for flightiness but for ruthless loyalty to the cause of her father, the ultraconservative politician Alvaro Alsogaray. The elder Alsogaray got less than seven per cent of the vote in his last try for the Presidency, but those million and a half votes were powerful: the military establishment and the moneyed élite are the source of much of his support.

Because Alsogaray has made a career of opposing the populist caudillo Juan Domingo Perón (1895-1974) and Perón's political successors, the first but not the greatest shock for followers of the family's political fortunes came in July of 1989, when the Peronist Carlos Menem, newly sworn in as President, appointed the father to the ranks of his political advisers and put the daughter in charge of privatizing the state telephone company. The situation was odd—a Peronist President asking a relentless political adversary to sell off a company that Perón himself had appropriated for the state. The photographs that soon began appearing in the press were odder still: María Julia and the President together at numerous state and social functions; María Julia showing off a mane of newly red hair and an increasingly shapely figure; María Julia laughing enchantingly, leaning so close to the President that her cheek nearly brushed his bushy sideburns. Still, nothing had

"I'm sorry to disappoint you, Roger, but I'm not the marinating kind."

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quite prepared the public for the interview that accompanied *Noticias*' cover photograph. "What do I feel for the Prez? . . . I love him very much," María Julia confessed, but she added, "Menem doesn't seduce me as a man, he's not my style." The story was perfect: it involved a rich and powerful person flouting convention, it touched on the Presidency, it had hubris and sexual innuendo, and it was all designed for, and exploited by, the press. An extra run of that issue of *Noticias* had to be printed less than twenty-four hours after the first printing hit the stands.

The peculiar convergence of the Menem era and an uncensored and rowdy press makes for great entertainment but for less than satisfying politics. Although Argentina has now had a civilian government for eight consecutive years, a span unequalled since 1933, the present boisterous circus is not really the kind of democracy that people had in mind back in 1982, when the bloody dictatorship collapsed as a result of its defeat in the Falklands War. This city, from its Frenchified boulevards to its most cherished rituals—five-o'clock tea, a visit to the analyst four times a week—is the embodiment of a national longing for Europe and its rational forms of civilization; it is Bonn, say, and not Caracas, that people here have in mind when they talk about democracy. The sense that Argentina happens to be on the wrong continent is pervasive. A local cartoon strip has been featuring the story of an about-to-be-born baby who refuses to leave the womb until he can emerge in Europe. Comparisons with the rest of Latin America are often taken amiss and often intended venomously: the term *carnaval carioca*—"Carnival in Rio"—is used to describe an incompetent mess. A former Air Force chief of staff was just sentenced to thirty days in jail for saying that the government's likely cancellation of a missile-development program threatened to turn the country into a "banana republic." And yet, the dream of sober grandeur notwithstanding, Argentina's real history lurches forward in episodes that veer from the ludicrous to the shameful.

Capalbo, who is well acquainted with both, is thirty-five. In 1981, when he graduated from a state university with a degree in history, journalism was an almost extinguished profession. Many of the country's best reporters and editors had died in the torture camps set

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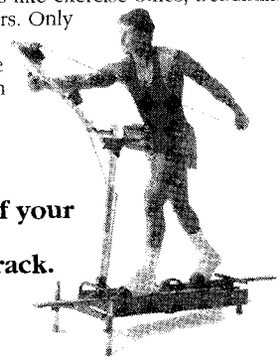

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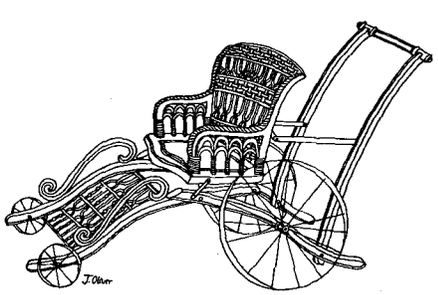
up by the military regime that took power in 1976. Most of the survivors were in exile. Self-censorship and toadying compliance with the policy of terror were the norm. A small literary magazine that Capalbo started back then with a few friends was clandestine of necessity. "There was nothing that could be legally written at the time," he says. "We set up the magazine because we wanted to have something to read. We wrote it, printed it, and distributed it by hand to a few friendly kiosks. It was really a way of trying to get in touch with people who felt and thought the same things we did."

After the dictatorship fell apart, Capalbo was one of the bright young men who joined Jacobo Timerman's rejuvenated version of an old establishment daily, *La Razón*. That was the time when Capalbo, too, entertained dreams of democratic journalism as a kind of platonic forum for the free and generous discussion of politics and ideas. The country had just elected Raúl Alfonsín, a President who seemed the embodiment of everything that Argentines aspired to be: He appeared modest, moderate, fair. Not being a Peronist, he did not come bearing that party's tradition of politics as revenge. He had not behaved cravenly during the years of dictatorial terror, and he had not indulged in the left's guerrilla lunacy. He was in every way the antithesis of the recent past, and so, Capalbo says, "he represented above all freedom from the fear of being killed." The new President was respectful of the press, and Capalbo characterizes the media's reciprocal behavior as levelheaded and boring. This peaceful interlude lasted about five years. In 1987, *La Razón* became involved in a financial scandal, at a time when its circulation was sinking. Timerman left the country in disgust, Capalbo quit, and, not long after, the Alfonsín administration began its slow and painful collapse. The century's most hopefully elected President had to leave office five months ahead of schedule—in July of 1989—defeated by an unrealistic economic program that was supposed to rescue Argentina from the financial pit the dictators had dug for it but was instead buried under an inflationary avalanche that reached a record 196.6 per cent.

The Alfonsín era is ended and, with it, the national effort to be well behaved. In the new era, Capalbo's editor at *Noticias* advised him to "let his id mesh with his superego" when he sat down to write a story about Menem; in the Freudian jargon that pollutes the conversation of middle-class Argentines, that meant he should write the wildest story he could, as long as he could provide the evidence. I had lunch with Capalbo a few weeks ago, shortly after he quit *Noticias* for a better job at a daily, and I asked him to go over some of the more memorable stories he had covered or supervised for the magazine in the spirit of his editor's exhortation.

During Easter week of last year, after a series of relatively minor scandals involving the possibility of corruption at high levels of government, Capalbo said, the city's walls were covered with posters calling for "loyalty to the President but not to the corrupt ones," and naming four officials, including Menem's brother Eduardo, who is the Senate chairman, as wrongdoers. Menem's wife, Zulema Yoma, a tempestuous woman whose marriage to the President has rarely been happy, and whose relations with her in-laws are openly hostile, was widely accused of financing the poster campaign. Capalbo thinks that the posters had a great deal to do with the fact that on May 4th a year ago Menem quietly moved out of the official residence in Olivos, a Buenos Aires suburb, and into a friend's house. This was followed by a long Presidential trip abroad, presumably timed to allow Zulema a seemly departure from Olivos and the marriage. It was not to be. She threw a lunch for the press corps at Olivos, to prove that she was still very much around ("She served us broiled beef for the main course and tangerines for dessert, to show that she was poor," a guest recalled), and stood her ground. Menem returned to Buenos Aires on June 11th, but not to Olivos. Two days later, Zulema found her way to the front door barred by men under the direct command of the brigadier in charge of Menem's security. The moment was recorded for nationwide viewing by a slew of reporters Zulema had brought along for the confrontation, having been alerted by her twenty-year-old son, Carlitos, that something was up.



Cameras also recorded Carlitos and his sister Zulemita emerging from the residence and embracing their distraught mother. That evening, Carlitos burst onto the set of a live television talk show, where the man who had drafted the Presidential decree expelling Zulema from Olivos was being interviewed, and demanded equal time.

"I know your father," the interviewer said. "And he must be crying as he watches this on television."

"All my life I have suffered, I have wept, for the two of them," Carlitos replied, looking near tears.

On July 2nd, Menem threw a huge sixtieth birthday party for himself in his home province, La Rioja; the celebration was reportedly organized by his constant companion María Julia Alsogaray. The *Noticias* cover story on her ran three weeks later.

A relative lull followed, which continued through December, when an abortive military uprising shook the country. Then, in January, came allegations that one of Menem's in-laws was involved in an extortion. This scandal, far from going away, has snowballed, to a point where the lull is remembered fondly now, as, in a way, are the good old days when the most one could gasp about was the President's wife banging on her own front door in full view of the nation. Similar stories have followed, of course; Capalbo can list the President's hot-rodding to the beach in the red Ferrari (a gift from some Italian-industrialist admirers), his subsequent weekend of photographically documented spiritual retreat at a Trappist monastery, and also his weekend of undocumented retreat in the bosky south of the country, from which he emerged with a swollen face that was explained as a reaction to a wasp sting. (*Noticias* gleefully tried to demonstrate that it was actually the result of a face-lift: the magazine produced witnesses who saw Menem enter a famous plastic surgeon's clinic late that Friday evening, and witnesses who saw the surgeon arrive at Olivos the following week, but the President's associates vigorously denied that any surgery took

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place.) Meanwhile, Menem has acquired a three-hundred-thousand-dollar bachelor pad in downtown Buenos Aires, and Zulema has filed for divorce, on the ground of infidelity.

THE most important stories in the headlines now, however, are not about flings and eyelid tucks but about drug trafficking and unfettered corruption—stories that Capalbo thinks would threaten the survival of a government in any European country or in the United States. But there are two reasons no one is questioning the stability of the Menem administration at this stage. The first is that, while the scandals so far have involved Presidential in-laws and Presidential appointees—and, in the most explosive cases, Presidential in-laws who are Presidential appointees—Menem himself has not been accused of any criminal activity. The second reason has to do with the experimental nature of democracy here—nobody knows what the rules of the game are, and no one knows what is supposed to happen if the game folds. Nevertheless, the stories that are appearing almost every day in the press must make unhappy breakfast reading in government circles.

Most of the worst stories involve Zulema Yoma's brothers and sisters. She has nine of them, and they all maintain close ties with Syria, from which both Menem's and the Yomas' parents emigrated early in the century. One sister, Delia, lived in Damascus for nearly thirty years, and is married to a retired Syrian Army officer. A brother, Karim, who runs a leather-import business in Madrid, was Secretary of Special Affairs in the Argentine Foreign Ministry after Menem took power. Another brother, Emir, runs the family leather-processing factory, and was until recently a Presidential adviser. The youngest sibling, Amalia, who is known as Amira, served as Menem's appointments secretary. She lived in Syria for several years and is reportedly a member of Hafez al-Assad's Baath Party. Amira used to be married to a Syrian national, Ibrahim al Ibrahim, who served briefly under Menem as an "overseer" for customs at Buenos Aires' Ezeiza Airport. He was removed from the post in March, shortly after the Spanish press broke the scandal that has become known, inevitably, as Yomagate.

The scandal involves allegations that Karim Yoma, Amira Yoma, and Ibrahim al Ibrahim were all part of a multinational money-laundering ring, in which the key Argentine operative is said to have been Menem's former head of the federal water system; this man is currently under arrest in Buenos Aires. The story first appeared in print in March, in the Spanish magazine *Cambio 16*, when, as a result of a Spanish government investigation, one of the alleged participants in the laundering operation turned state's evidence, implicating the Yomas. The Spanish government's witness, Indalecio Iglesias Cruz, who was arrested following the seizure of five hundred and thirty kilos of cocaine on a ship docked in Cape Verde, told the Spanish federal prosecutor in the case how previous drug-money profits had been shipped from New York to Ezeiza Airport and from there to Uruguay and, presumably, Europe. Ibrahim's was among the names mentioned, along with those of a number of Cuban, Panamanian, and Uruguayan operatives, one of whom has since been arrested in Montevideo and is facing extradition to the United States. Iglesias said he had been told by his Argentine control to contact Karim Yoma in Madrid, because Karim had already performed some money-laundering services for the ring. More damningly, he said that he and two associates had once gone to Ezeiza Airport to meet Amira Yoma and Ibrahim, who turned over four suitcases they had just brought from New York. Iglesias then verified that the suitcases were full of United States currency. Amira Yoma has been on leave from her post on Menem's staff since shortly after the scandal broke. (She has not been charged with any crime in either Argentina or Spain.) At the request of the Spanish prosecutor, Ibrahim has been indicted in Buenos Aires on charges that he used his position as Presidential appointee at Ezeiza Airport for money-laundering purposes.

According to people who know the Yomas well, by far the most intelligent and ambitious member of the family is Emir. He is Menem's longtime financial backer and ally—so much so that even during two lengthy separations between Zulema Yoma and Menem Emir remained friendly with his brother-in-law. He was a go-between in each of the couple's unsuccessful

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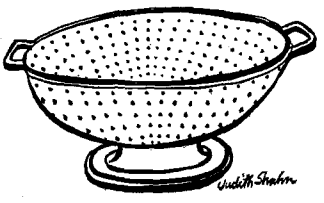
reconciliation attempts: once in 1982, after an initial four-year separation, when Menem ran for reëlection as governor of La Rioja, and then again in 1988, following a second four-year estrangement, after Menem won the Peronists' Presidential candidacy. On taking power, Menem appointed Emir a Presidential adviser, and in December of 1989 named Erman González, Emir's former accountant at the leather factory, Economy Minister. (González was shifted from Economy to the Defense Ministry last February.) Emir Yoma, who has not been implicated in the money-laundering case, was dismissed from his advisory post in January, as the result of another scandal, still unfolding, in which he is accused of participating in an extortion scheme against the Swift-Armour transnational meat-packing corporation—a scandal known now as Swiftgate, which could end up implicating the highest levels of government in a criminal cover-up.

Like nearly all the most significant Argentine stories of the last twelve months, the one that may yet be the undoing of the Yoma clan first saw print in *Página/12*, an upstart daily that has just finished celebrating its fourth anniversary, and whose circulation has climbed in that short time to the No. 3 spot. It doesn't look like a major daily, and it certainly doesn't act like one. For one thing, Jorge Lanata, the editor-in-chief, is barely thirty-one, and his idea of business attire is bluejeans, a tweed jacket, and a neon tie. The Government House (Casa Rosada) correspondent, in charge of covering Menem, is an ebullient twenty-five-year-old who could pass for seventeen. The paper looks and reads like what one would expect from such a crowd—a literate rag for Latin America's most literate and literary population. The tabloid format is cluttered with overambitious graphic design; the paper's scope is narrow, focussing almost exclusively on Menem, capital politics, and the military. The back pages are full of ads for Lacan workshops and rolfing therapy. It is unabashedly of the left, and conscientiously provocative.



Readers love it. They talk about the savage cartoon that appears every day on the front page and repeat the punning headlines, which Lanata is usually responsible for, and which he freely admits are often dreadful. On Corrientes Avenue, where the newsstands and secondhand bookstores stay open all night, one can enter any café at 2 A.M. and see a group engaged in an intense discussion of the general hopelessness and hilarity of events as presented in the latest *Página*. Months after a given event, *porteños* of every political leaning summarized their own reaction to it for me by describing *Página's* front page. There was the time the paper responded to Menem's accusation that it was engaging in "yellow journalism" by printing the entire edition on bright-yellow paper. There was the front page for the first day of the World Cup soccer tournament last year, in Milan: it was written entirely in spaghetti Italian, including the front-page joke and an account of an outburst from Zulema Yoma ("*Explosivi declarazione di Zulema: La Prima Donna*"). There was the time when the Planning Minister announced an inflation index far below what consumers had measured on their supermarket bills, and Lanata turned the tabloid format sideways to make room for the Minister's nose, which the art department had lengthened to match Pinocchio's.

Irreverence edged with anger is what makes *Página/12* fit in so nicely with the spirit of the times, but what keeps it journalistically viable is its muckraking. Its most signal achievement so far has been its coverage of the Swiftgate scandal, which, together with Yomagate, has transformed the President's normally easygoing charm into irritability. Swiftgate began on January 6th, when the paper leaked a letter from the United States Ambassador, Terence Todman, addressed to the then Economy Minister, Erman González. In the letter Todman informed González that certain high Argentine government officials had asked Swift-Armour, which has had significant investments in Argentina since the beginning of the century, "for substantial payments in order to provide the necessary documents to import machinery." (In fact, what Swift was requesting was a standard tax exemption, worth four hundred thousand dollars, on equipment already at customs.) Three days later, *Página* and two other dailies stated that the man extorting payment from Swift-Armour was none other than Emir Yoma, the President's brother-in-law and the former boss of the Economy Minister. Although the President initially accused *Página* of being a "journalistic delinquent," Todman confirmed that the letter was authentic. There followed a burst of tension in the normally smooth relations between the Menem and the Bush Administrations, and a federal-court inquiry. Ambassador Todman predictably declined to appear in court. The Swift-Armour official who had been asked for the bribe did testify but declined to identify his extortioner. The reporter who wrote the original *Página* story refused to reveal his sources, and, for lack of evidence, the investigation was provisionally closed down on May 3rd.

There was also a separate investigation by a standing body of government attorneys, which Menem asked to trace how the story found its way into print. The investigators failed to uncover the mysterious extortioner's identity, but in their report to the President they did conclude that Raúl Granillo Ocampo—the man who had drafted the Presidential decree expelling Zulema Yoma from Olivos—was the source of *Página's* leak.

Granillo Ocampo, who is well groomed, good-looking, and fond of wearing dark glasses, is a powerful member of Menem's inner circle. Like Menem and the Yomas, he is from La Rioja. It is hard to know what to make of the fact that at last report he was continuing to play a weekly game of tennis with the President, or of the fact that after the investigators named him as the leak he told *Noticias* that if the government continued to accuse him he would be morally obliged to tell what he knew before a court. (There are reliable indications that he was not in fact the source of the *Página* leak.) The workings of the inner circle have always been hard to decipher; it is small, goes back a long way, and is held together by conflicting but unswerving loyalties. Granillo Ocampo is probably the man whose political judgment Menem trusts most.

There has been speculation in the press that the whole Swiftgate affair was engineered by the anti-Yoma faction in Menem's inner circle to force Menem to break with his embarrassing in-laws. Others see the hand of

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Menem himself behind the scandal. A foreign diplomat speculated that Swiftgate was actually a way of driving a wedge between the Menem and the Bush Administrations at a time when the Argentine government is seeking what its Foreign Minister Guido di Tella refers to as "carnal relations" with the United States. (In pursuit of that goal, Argentina sent two warships to the Gulf War, sided with the United States in a human-rights vote against Cuba at the United Nations, and keeps in such close touch with Ambassador Todman that he is commonly referred to here as "the viceroy." Bush, for his part, played tennis with Menem on his state visit last December.)

For whatever reasons, Granillo Ocampo retained his friendship with the President and simultaneously indicated that he would spill the beans on Swiftgate. Taking the hint, the judge in charge of the federal investigation reopened the case on May 10th. Granillo Ocampo reportedly met with Menem and told him what he was planning to testify, but very few other people had an inkling of what he would say. The day after the inquiry reopened, I went by the *Página/12* offices to ask Lanata, who is facing several libel suits, what would happen with Swiftgate. "Nothing" was his unhesitating reply. "Our reporter will be questioned again and refuse to reveal his sources. Granillo Ocampo will be called in again and deny everything, and that will be the end of that."

With certain exceptions, trials and court proceedings are secret in Argentina, and no one knew what Granillo Ocampo had said until the following week, when *Página* published a devastating account of his testimony, based on undisclosed sources. According to the *Página* version, the question of Emir Yoma's alleged bribe-taking had been discussed at a Cabinet meeting on January 11th, five days after *Página* leaked the Todman letter. Menem chaired the meeting, and the then Foreign Minister, Domingo Cavallo, who had met with Todman earlier, told the President and the rest of the Cabinet that Swift-Armour's extortioner was indeed Emir Yoma. After Cavallo allegedly finished reporting what he was said to have learned from Todman, *Página* went on to say, Yoma was called in; Cavallo told him that Todman's source for the damning information on him was a Swift-Armour official. Yoma denied everything.

There are those who would argue that within the national context of crime, which in the recent past has included officially sanctioned torture and murder and the merry embezzlement of uncounted billions of dollars, Emir Yoma's alleged involvement in an extortion bid is a relatively minor affair. As Menem's next-oldest brother and acting appointments secretary, Munir, put it, talking with a reporter about the dollar value of the tax exemption Swift was seeking, "they're uncovering a case worth barely four hundred thousand dollars. That really isn't an amount to get alarmed about." The fact is, though, that most people here—and particularly the working-class people who voted for Menem—have to struggle to earn a decent living and are often kept awake at night by the fear that the monster of hyperinflation could reappear at any moment to devour their income. Tens of thousands of state-enterprise workers have been laid off since Menem took power, as part of his ambitious free-market plan to restructure the economy and ease the state's lopsided burden. For weeks now, retirees have been camping out in front of the federal-court building, angrily demanding an increase in their pensions, which are a hundred and twenty dollars a month. These are the people who are at the core of the Peronists' traditional base of support, and soliciting a bribe worth four hundred thousand dollars—no matter which government officials were involved—looks greedy indeed from their perspective. Menem is not accused of taking the money, but in *Página's* telling of the Cabinet-meeting episode he appears clearly implicated in a cover-up. The story does not sit well with the citizenry.

So far, though, the consequences of the revelations are nebulous. Menem would probably have suffered substantially greater political damage if the day before the *Página* story he hadn't publicly announced that he would rid the country of corruption, "no matter who's involved." No heads have rolled yet. Although all the government

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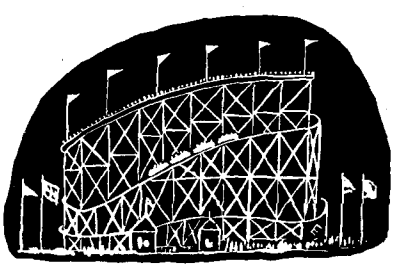
officials present at the Cabinet meeting have been called in to testify in the court's ongoing Swiftgate investigation, only Granillo Ocampo has commented publicly on the case. He has upheld *Página's* story. It is reported that Emir Yoma has also been called in to testify, but leaks are getting harder to come by these days, and no one at *Página* knows what he said. Yoma does not give the impression of a man in disgrace, though: Menem was the guest of honor at the baptism of Yoma's only son, and Yoma spends much of his time in the private office of the President's chief of staff, Eduardo Bauzá.

THE man who broke the Swiftgate story and most of *Página's* other big scoops is Horacio Verbitsky, a work-obsessed forty-nine-year-old reporter who comes out of what he calls "the militant, rancorous, aggressive, unforgiving tradition of the nineteen-seventies," and is delighted to have his natural tendencies tempered now by the more lighthearted kids at *Página.* Typically, having said this, he looked almost offended when I commented that he was indeed looking very happy these days. "Happiness is for more serious things," he retorted. As a reporter, at least, Verbitsky is blessed with an almost complete inability to see the good side of any situation. For him, the press's current freedom is only a sign that "the bourgeoisie is feeling very strong, and so the press is a luxury it can allow itself." He thinks that *Página's* high circulation is possible because the collapse of the dictatorship and, above all, the humiliation of the Falklands War created what he describes as a new, less arrogant moral climate, in which people finally needed to hear the truth about themselves. He is not at all sure that the new humility will last, though, or that Argentina will be able to refrain from undertaking another wild adventure in the near future. "If Argentines aren't marching to the clash of cymbals, we're not satisfied," he says. "We always need to go riding to glory."

I went to see him one recent Monday, the day after *Página* ran a four-page story of his which moved several people I know to phone each other for comfort after reading it. The story was about a Chilean immigrant named Luis Jaramillo, a forty-one-year-old factory worker whose passions were classical music and mechanical inventions, who was never a militant of the union in the boiler factory where he worked for sixteen years, and who was respected by both his co-workers and his supervisors. He was "disappeared" one day in 1976, along with seventy other workers, not long after the Peronist Montonero guerrillas kidnapped a factory manager, and in the midst of an escalating series of demands by the union. The management of the factory had called in the military to set up operations inside the factory grounds and deal with "the labor process and the terrorist process." The disappearance of Jaramillo and the other workers was a result. At the time, military operations of that kind were called cleanups. Now they are what Argentina remembers as the Dirty War.

It lasted six years; left at least nine thousand dead, nearly all of them kidnapped, or *desaparecidos;* taught an entire generation of soldiers that torture is a legitimate weapon; destroyed what there was of Argentina's feeble civic tradition; and went on under the willful indifference of much of society. Theoretically, it was designed to extinguish the Montoneros and the members of the People's Revolutionary Army, or E.R.P., whose combined numbers could not have come to more than three or four thousand in the groups' heyday. The Montoneros had been formed, with Perón's equivocal consent, to fight for his return from an eighteen-year exile in Franco's Spain. The Marxist E.R.P. was fighting for socialist revolution. Perón returned, aging and addled, in 1973, and easily won the Presidential elections, with his third wife, the former cabaret dancer María Estela Martínez, or Isabelita, as his Vice-President, and with her spiritual adviser, the sinister ultra-rightist José López Rega, as the regime's éminence grise. Perón died in 1974, and under Isabelita the country slipped into chaos. López Rega organized death squads against Jews, Montoneros, and suspected leftists, laying the groundwork for the terror that began when the military finally stepped in, in 1976. Isabelita and most senior Peronist officials were placed under arrest then. (One of them was Menem, who at the time was governor of La Rioja province.) Intellectuals, journalists, and men like Luis Jaramillo were suddenly prime targets of a war they never knew they had been recruited for.



The things the military did to people like Jaramillo during the Dirty War have been well documented since, but Verbitsky's story in *Página/12* was different, because he had found a former manager at the factory where Jaramillo worked. This man had not been able to shake off his guilt over the part he had played in the workers' fate, and he was willing to describe the decision-making process that led to management's invitation to the military to operate within the factory, in full knowledge of what was likely to happen. Verbitsky thus provided what is probably the only existing firsthand account of the private sector's significant role in the military's bloody national purge.

Verbitsky's reconstruction of Jaramillo's captivity and execution was made possible by the patient work of a group of young men and women who call themselves simply the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team. Started seven years ago by a United States forensic specialist, Dr. Clyde C. Snow, the group has been systematically digging up Argentina's awful past, in the form of mass graves where the Dirty War soldiers deposited their dead. The forensic team excavates the graves with archeological precision, sorting and numbering the bones, so that the real history of Argentina may be known, and so that families may one day properly bury their dead. It found Jaramillo's remains late last year and, through the network of *desaparecido* survivors and relatives, was able to give Verbitsky an account of Jaramillo's passage through various camps, with their routine of torture, beatings, and starvation. Prisoners who were held with Jaramillo have testified that they were fed twice a month and were allowed to drink water every four or five days, and that the bodies of those who died from this treatment were left to rot among the survivors. Jaramillo survived for a few months in the camps, and then he was taken out somewhere and shot—twice in the back and once in the head.

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When I talked to Verbitsky again, not long ago, he was in a pensive state, bemused by the unexpected consequences of his story, which were still unfolding. On the one hand, he said, the forensic team had been flooded with calls from readers who had *desaparecido* relatives, who had never felt they could trust a government official with this information, and who now wanted the team's help. On the other hand, his management source had met with the factory's principal owner, who wanted to know only one thing: Who was the competitor who had paid *Página/12* to print this damning information about his company?

Dealing with the recent past does not come easily here. The press, the justice system, and human-rights groups like the forensic team have been largely responsible for uncovering whatever truth surfaces, and even today their efforts remain unwelcome in many official circles. (The forensic team, for example, operates exclusively on foreign funding.) The process of coming to terms with the past has been made more complicated by Menem's decision to grant a blanket pardon to all those who were tried and sentenced under the Alfonsín regime for their participation in the Dirty War, the Falklands War, or the three military uprisings against Alfonsín himself. The first batch of pardons was issued on October 8, 1989, and not even *Página* had the spirit for a joke: its front page that day was completely blank. Polls showed that more than two-thirds of the population disapproved of the final set of pardons, signed a year later, which included absolutions for former President Jorge Rafael Videla—the Army general who overthrew Isabelita and masterminded what he called the Proceso de Reorganización Nacional—and a few of the more notorious torturers, and also for their stated enemy, the Montonero leader Mario Firmenich, who some people believe was an Army intelligence operative all along. This set of pardons was signed on December 28th, which is the local equivalent of April Fools' Day.

Less than three weeks earlier, Menem had had to face *his* first military uprising: by the *carapintadas*, or painted faces—ultra-nationalist right-wing officers who like to get themselves up in camouflage gear and makeup and declare themselves patriots at war. Many of the *carapintadas* involved in December's uprising against Menem had been pardoned by him a year before. Since there was no public support for the pardons, and not even any great pressure from the military hierarchy to grant them, the people I talked to in the justice system and in the press speculated that the pardons had been an attempt by Menem to mollify the *carapintadas*, their supporters among the moneyed élite, and their leader, Colonel Mohamed Alí Seineldín, with whom Menem shares certain key backers. During the 1989 election campaign, Seineldín, who had been imprisoned for his role in the anti-Alfonsín uprisings, spoke favorably of Menem, and subsequently received frequent visits from the President's associates. None of this, however, was enough to prevent another rebellion.

The uprising against Menem last December 3rd was rather more serious than the three earlier ones against Alfonsín. During the 1987 uprising, the journalist Daniel Capalbo recalls, he stayed up all night in the rebel barracks arguing politics with an officer, who ended up in tears over the miserable farce that was the Falklands War. Nobody argued about anything on December 3rd. The *carapintadas* took to the streets and occupied the military national-headquarters building, just two blocks from the Casa Rosada. By the time the fighting was over, thirteen people were dead and twenty-five had been severely wounded. Fifteen principal conspirators in the revolt, including Seineldín, are currently on trial in federal court, in a case that, like earlier public-order trials, has been declared open to the public.

Perhaps the most striking thing about the trials is the extent of public indifference to them: it appears to be total. When I attended a morning session recently, in an ornate but gloomy courtroom, no one was there to listen to the testimony except the fifteen accused officers, neat and straight-backed in their uniforms, and their relatives and a few reporters.

"During the Dirty War trials it was different," a member of the prosecution staff told me. "But people are cynical now. A lot of the people Menem pardoned in the first round took part

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in the December 3rd uprising, so this trial strikes some people as futile. There is also a sense in which people now feel some respect for the *carapintadas*. These guys are willing to stand up in court and say, 'I take responsibility for the uprising.' Nobody ever takes responsibility for anything here—we see stories of corruption every day in the press, and political leaders never keep their word. We're not used to people who stand up for their actions, and we wish our leaders would. By comparison, the *carapintadas* come out looking good."

I asked this prosecution-staff member whether she thought that the trials could eventually help make the military a more democratic institution.

She leaned back and sighed, and said, "Who's democratic? The sector of the military that remains loyal to the President isn't loyal because it's democratic. It's loyal because it's absolutely authoritarian, and because it happens to agree with Menem's free-market program. It isn't easy for an institution that has had life-and-death power over all of us to transform itself. It's hard for everyone. Am I democratic? I don't know. I've never lived in what I consider a democracy, and the dictatorship closed off all alternatives—unless you were one of those who were willing to risk their lives against it. You can't reconstruct a civilian society very quickly after such experiences."

Like many of the reporters I talked to, this woman said she was facing a new and unexpected dilemma as a result of the freedom, given her by democracy, to hunt for information that could result in the fall of this administration. "Now that the press is free, we get to discuss everything that happens absolutely openly," she said. "But we talk among ourselves all the time here about another problem: What if we investigated and found that the President was involved in wrongdoing? We would face a choice between resolving the case with little or no justice—covering it up—or provoking the fall of another President. We have no idea what the consequences of that would be."

THE second chapter of the Swiftgate scandal marks the first time that Menem has appeared to be directly implicated in any wrongdoing. If the court were eventually to ratify the allegations that Menem presided over a meeting in which his own Foreign Minister stated that Emir Yoma was an extortionist, and then failed to take action on the case, he would be held responsible for a large cover-up. It would be hard for Menem to persuade public opinion that he was ignorant all along of the other questionable events that have taken place during his time in office. The questions of what Menem knew and when he knew it are not being posed either to the President or in press stories, and when I asked reporters why not they replied in the same terms as the prosecution-staff member: "What if he falls? What then?" Despite the fact that Raúl Alfonsín—faced with three military uprisings, with waves of hyperinflation that brought food riots to Argentine cities for the first time ever, and with so crushing a defeat for his party in the 1989 elections that his ability to govern was threatened—decided at last to resign five months ahead of schedule, the transfer of power to Carlos Menem still counts as an orderly succession, the first from one elected civilian President to another in more than half a century. That would not be the case if the effects of the Yomagate and Swiftgate scandals, possibly combined with a resurgence of hyperinflation, forced Menem to leave office before the 1995 Presidential elections.

In government circles, the most dreaded scenario is one in which a wave of hyperinflation strikes just before the congressional and gubernatorial elections this coming October, the Peronists therefore lose resoundingly, and more damning information surfaces. There is general agreement that under those circumstances Menem would have to resign. Constitutionally, power would then pass to the Vice-President, Eduardo Duhalde, but, given that a glamorous talk-show hostess once asked him point-blank if he was, as rumor had it, the head of the Buenos Aires drug mafia, it is unlikely that he would have the political credibility necessary to take firm command of a country in uproar. (This is a particularly bizarre rumor, because Duhalde has tried to stake his reputation on an anti-drug stand.) Next in the line of succession is the Senate chairman, but he is Menem's brother Eduardo. After that comes the head of the Supreme Court, who is an old man. A triumvirate that could lead the country to early elections is mentioned as a possibility, but this kind of speculation is seen as getting way ahead of a game that people desperately want to finish out by the rules.

In La Rioja province on the day after the second part of the Swiftgate

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story appeared in *Página/12*, I went up to the President as he was finishing dessert at a banquet in his honor and asked him to comment on the story. He was visiting his native province as part of festivities commemorating the four-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the city of La Rioja, and he had arrived before the Swiftgate story appeared. I was expecting tight security, many flacks with prepared statements, and a cloud of reporters. Instead, I found open access for anyone who cared to take a seat at the banquet table in a local hotel (the tables eventually filled up, but there was no rush), and the only reporters I saw were two Casa Rosada correspondents, from *Página* and from the leading daily, *Clarín*. Menem, a short, dapper sixty-one-year-old with Levantine features and the trim figure of a man half his age, looked a little startled when I approached and put my question, then apologized for refusing to answer. As if I might doubt that he would prefer not to talk, he pointed to the two correspondents. "Ask those two girls over there," he said. "They'll confirm that I'm not even giving them interviews, and they're friends of mine."

Before becoming President, Menem spent his entire political career in the province of La Rioja, a desolate-looking place that produces some textiles, significant amounts of leather, and a little wine. (The Menem family has its own, inexpensive label.) There aren't many people in this rugged, hilly land that is supposed to resemble the Syrian countryside Menem's parents and thousands of other Rioja settlers came from. The city of La Rioja has a hundred thousand inhabitants, and the entire province only as many more. Goats occasionally wander onto the airport's one landing strip and keep the plane waiting. On the outskirts of the city, workers ride their bicycles past a long string of abandoned warehouses to the few factories that remain open. In town, orange trees shade the narrow sidewalks, pomegranates and rosebushes bloom in the yards, and grape bowers surround the doorways. On Sundays and holidays, the better-off families pile into their cars, drive around the downtown area until they're dizzy, and then head home so the fathers can tend to their card games.

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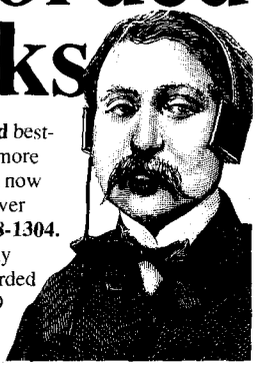

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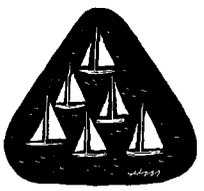
the Fourth Centennial Commemorative Parade was providing an exciting break from routine; spectators lined the sidewalks for blocks, and, for more than three hours, enthusiastically applauded every one of the horseback gaucho delegations and school bands. Then they surged onto the parade route and toward the reviewing stand, where Menem shook hands tirelessly and asked well-wishers about their relatives, their grocery stores, their government jobs. He knew many of them as friends and also as former constituents from his days as governor. Menem was first elected governor of the province in 1973. He was a fervent Peronist then, and the famous sideburns are proof: he swore to let them grow full-length, in the style of La Rioja's nineteenth-century caudillo Facundo Quiroga, if Perón was ever allowed to return from his long exile in Spain and rule again. Perón did, and, despite the chaos that followed, and five years that Menem spent in prison after the coup Isabelita and the Montoneros had brought upon themselves, he kept the sideburns. They have been diminishing steadily since his Presidential campaign, though.



An old friend of the Menems in La Rioja, who often visited the governor in prison with baskets of supplies, remembered him lying in his cell and swearing that he would get back at the military by becoming President. The friend's husband said he thought that Menem had set this goal for himself long before. He remembered that Zulema Yoma always said that Carlos Menem had become a convert from Islam to Catholicism early in life in order to comply with the Argentine constitution, which bars non-Catholics from the Presidency.

Whenever the ambition seized him, the Presidency was a seemingly impossible goal: in Buenos Aires and in the seaside resort of Mar del Plata, which Menem has frequented for years, upper-class Argentines spoke of him fondly but not without condescension as the *loco divino*—an engaging, cordial eccentric from the provinces, whose brand of Peronism did not seem to include the defiant populism that set the élite's teeth on edge, but who certainly could not be considered *presidenciable.* His standing within the Peronist Party—which is officially known as the Partido Justicialista—was not much higher. He was not part of the inner circle of labor bosses and Party lifers, and he did not participate much in Party politics. He did something else: he travelled constantly throughout the country, visiting thousands of *unidades de base*—neighborhood Party headquarters—shaking hands, remembering names, himself unforgettable in a caudillo getup consisting of sideburns and red poncho. When he decided to run for the Party chairmanship—and thus for the Party's Presidential candidacy—he was considered such an unlikely threat that his opponent hardly bothered to campaign against him. Antonio Cafiero—experienced and crafty, solidly established in the Peronist hierarchy—lost the candidacy by a large margin to Carlos Menem in July of 1988.

The campaign that followed had messianic overtones. The novelist and journalist Tomás Eloy Martínez, whose splendid historical fiction "The Perón Novel" was published in the United States three years ago, remembers Menem dressed all in white, riding in a "Menemobile," raising his hands to the crowd as if in blessing. The candidate exhorted the Argentine people to "rise and follow me," but he also continued to play a hard tennis game, stay late at parties, and eye attractive women. Somehow, the combination did him no harm on Election Day. "The thing about Menem is that he is as contradictory and unpredictable as the country," Martínez says. "It's an integral part of his attractiveness." Although the candidate of the Unión Cívica Radical, President Alfonsín's party, would have had little chance of winning under any circumstances, the unlikely Peronist candidate won by a landslide—ten percentage points. In an extraordinary interview in the gossip magazine *Gente* last December, Menem showed that he understood the source of his appeal—the identification with the national spirit that Martínez describes. The *Gente* interviewer was inquiring about the effects on his public standing of his "numerous sporting accidents, the divorce, the public statements."

"Things happen to me, and I do the things that any normal person does,"

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Menem replied. "I'm frank, and everything is visible. What people wouldn't forgive me for is hypocrisy, falseness, or demagoguery. People are tired of rulers who have lied all their lives about the government or about their private life. The same things happen to me that happen to everyone, and I talk about them. Or they become known."

A quibble might be that it doesn't happen to everyone that he gets to be President, or that the directors of an Italian motorcycle company decide to make him a present of a Ferrari—a gift that was much on the public mind at the time of the interview. The reporter asked Menem if he intended to keep the car.

"Of course," he answered, a little testily. "They gave it to *me*. Why are people scandalized?"

The reporter pointed out that official presents are part of the national patrimony, and Menem said that if that was the case he "had no problem" in turning the car over eventually. "But what I'm telling you is that nobody can tell me what to do with something that was given to me." Having made that statement, he proceeded a few weeks later to drive the car at over a hundred and thirty miles per hour to Mar del Plata, in the continuing conviction that, as he said in another interview last year, "people follow me because I am a transgressing President." (He finally had to put the car on the market in May. So far, there have been no takers.)

People also follow him—or, at any rate, were willing to vote for him—because, no matter who Menem may be as an individual, politically he is a Peronist, and that means he belongs to one of the largest and most militant parties in the Western world. Despite the many horrors that Peronism has brought to Argentina—the tradition of politics as confrontation, the dreadful, boundlessly corrupt years of Isabelita's rule, the death squads founded by her spiritual adviser López Rega, the terror imposed by the Montoneros—perfectly reasonable people are still reluctant to renounce Perón, seventeen years after his death. Guillermo Saccomanno is a case in point. He has short, wiry hair and a face that crinkles easily into a smile, which comes with a shrug and a shake of the head whenever he has to confess that, despite everything, he is not only a Peronist but a former campaign worker for the man he now calls Méndez. Saccomanno and thousands of other Argentines call Menem Méndez, because they are convinced that the President is *mufa*—that associating with him, or even pronouncing his name, can bring extreme bad luck. As evidence, Saccomanno cites the dubious penalty goal that cost Argentina the World Cup last year after Menem attended the opening ceremonies in Milan; the death of Menem's first Economy Minister within a week of the man's taking office, and, only months later, of the man who replaced Menem as governor of La Rioja; and the fact that recently, after a long evening Saccomanno spent with friends bewailing the Menem Presidency without taking the Méndez precaution, one of the friends had got two traffic tickets on the short drive home. Saccomanno is a writer—he has published two prize-winning novels—but he also free-lances as a scriptwriter for the arty adult comic books that Argentina exports to France and Italy, and as a campaign copywriter, whose clients tend to win elections.

Saccomanno can go on at some length about his perception that Méndez is a clowning, irresponsible, self-centered offense to the office of the Presidency. He didn't feel so strongly about the matter two years ago, but he wasn't enthusiastic, either. Nevertheless, he agreed to sign on for the campaign. "I'm a Peronist," he explains. "I had to do it." For him, "Peronism of the first stage"—the years in power from 1946 to the time Perón was overthrown, in 1955—represents the closest thing Argentina has ever had to government for and by the people: together with his legendary second wife, Evita, Perón defied the landed oligarchy by making the despised "black heads" and "no-shirts" (the *criollo* migrants from the provinces and the working-class European immigrants in Buenos Aires) the center of his attention and the real beneficiaries of many of his programs. He treated them like citizens, Saccomanno says, and they responded in kind: the no-shirts joined his party, voted massively for him, argued politics, and acted as if they had a role to play in history. Others say that Perón and Evita ransacked the wealthy Argentine state's coffers for their personal gain, and planted the seeds of the current economic disaster by putting the state in charge of everything from telephones to shoe factories. Saccomanno thinks that Perón had this century's only enlightened social policy: he built schools and hospitals and left behind one of the continent's most progressive labor codes. "My father is a lifelong socialist, and he could never have imagined that his son would become a Peronist," Saccomanno says. "But the left in this country is a failure—it's élitist, mechanistic, and corrupt. Peronism represents the interests of the working class much more."

Saccomanno is critical of Perón's lifelong flirtation with Fascism, his systematic use of thuggery, his cynical exploitation of fanaticism. He can't, however, bring himself to be critical of the millions of people who are still devoted to Perón, so when the Menem campaign people approached him he signed on, and did his best with the candidate's campaign slogans, although he found them vague. (The key one was "Follow me, I will not deceive you.") On Election Night, after months of hard work, he found himself on one of three floors of the congressional office building where Menem victory parties were being held. The media campaign workers—advertising-agency people, journalists, and writers like Saccomanno, people who had survived the years of the military dictatorship in near-hiding or had had to flee abroad—had a drab sort of party: sandwiches and cheap wine in plastic glasses, and a conspicuous absence of big-name politicians. Menem never showed up to thank them. Saccomanno looked through the doorway at a party on another floor, which Menem did attend. Its host was one of the regulars of the night scene that Menem loves—a man who had got rich managing the soccer star Diego Maradona. There was champagne and live music and laughter there, and guests of a kind that Saccomanno would never have expected to see at a Peronist celebration: "movie stars, oligarchs, and the man we whistled down and cursed in the campaign room whenever he ap-

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peared on television." That man was Alvaro Alsogaray, who was there with his daughter, María Julia. It was the first real inkling Saccomanno had that Menem might not be an orthodox Peronist after all.

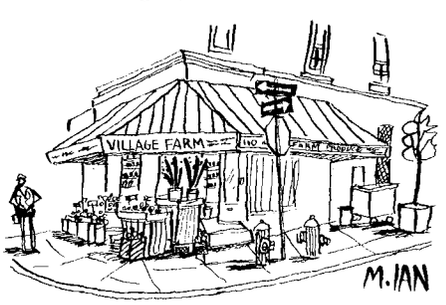
WHEN I finally met María Julia Alsogaray, I found her much more pleasant and intelligent than she appears in the photo layouts she so patiently sits for. Dressed not in a bathing suit or a slit-to-the-navel evening gown but in a blouse and a short skirt, she talked in a posh, cluttered private office in the downtown shopping district while in a neighboring room her aides were trying to decide which type of television program among the several that were being offered would best suit her image. She issued brisk orders to a secretary, told an assistant to prepare her costume change for the evening, and stated forthrightly that the reason she and her father were now on such good terms with a Peronist President was not that they had wavered in their principles but that the President had come around to her father's point of view on how governments and economies should be run. "The Peronist Party hasn't changed," she said. "The President changed despite the Party, and he has made a hundred-and-eighty-degree change in political direction from Perón. We have met on the common ground of the idea of a free-market economy and freedom." María Julia thinks that Menem kept his campaign promises so vague because he actually didn't know what he was going to do once he got elected. "He's a man with very strong intuitions, and what he sensed is that for the last forty-five years every government—military or Peronist, or whatever—had done the same thing, which was to mire the country in bureaucracy," she said. "The only thing that hadn't been tried was what we have been upholding with almost sectlike firmness. Once he was in power, he knew he had the strength to do what was necessary."

Menem is betting that he will go down in history not as the king of scandal but as the man who managed to reverse the country's sixty-year economic decline and dismantle an arthritic but omnivorous bureaucracy by putting virtually everything the state owns on the auction block. Whether he can accomplish these feats by hastily selling off the national telephone company to the Spanish state telephone company without considering other offers, as María Julia did last year with his approval, remains to be seen. One can also wonder whether a private sector that has made fortunes on speculating with the rates of inflation and money exchange will be willing to bring its capital back from abroad and risk it in industrial projects. María Julia thinks that even if Menem is successful in laying the groundwork for a healthier economy he will pay a political price, and so will her father's party, the Unión del Centro Democrático. "The project isn't ready to bear fruit yet," she told me. "And we have elections coming up in October. At this point, the people who most strongly support Menem are the people who voted for us, not for him, but we have also suffered from the scandals and garish events that are taking place, which our voters don't really go along with."

I asked María Julia if the Unión del Centro Democrático would not also continue to pay a price with voters at large because she and her father had always maintained silence on the issue of the atrocities committed by the military during the Dirty War.

She crossed and uncrossed her legs and teasingly began speculating on whether she had really had liposuction recently, but she finally came back to the subject. "There might have been a problem on the question of openness," she said. "There were many things the military needed to do, but these things should have been done openly."

The question of Menem's popularity is more complicated than María Julia appears to think. I spent a long afternoon with Felipe Noguera, of the polling firm of Mora y Araujo, Noguera y Asociados, discussing the charts and graphs of the President's political health. Noguera thinks that Menem's betrayal of Peronist principles in adopting free-market economics hasn't necessarily cost him a great many potential votes. "When he got elected, he decided that free market was the way to go, and he said, 'What's got to be done has got to be done,'" Noguera told me. "That gave him a lot of popularity. People wanted decisiveness, and they wanted economic change, because there is general agreement that the old system doesn't work anymore." Noguera also disagrees that Menem's outlandish private life is necessarily a handicap; despite the juicy scandals, his popularity ratings have averaged forty-five per cent or so, with occasional dips for hyperinflation or the military pardons. "For one thing, he's more fun than Alfonsín ever was," Noguera said. "But it's obviously a high-risk strategy that depends on his government's continued economic stability."



Noguera, who has been prescient in the past (he's one of the few professional pollsters to have predicted Violeta Chamorro's victory in Nicaragua), thinks that on the whole things look good for Menem, and even for politics in Argentina. Reading the charts, he finds it encouraging that people can show more support for Domingo Cavallo—who was Menem's Foreign Minister at the time of Swiftgate and is now the Finance Minister—and his economic programs than for the President himself. Noguera thinks it is a sign that people are becoming less personality-oriented in their politics. He thinks that part of the reason for the tidal wave of corruption scandals is that people no longer take corruption for granted, as they did during the infinitely corrupting regime of Isabelita Perón, for example. But if the corruption investigations and economic conditions turn against Menem, Noguera believes, he will no longer be perceived as engagingly flamboyant, but as a failure. "Perón had a wise saying," Noguera pointed out. "In politics, one can recover from anything except looking like a fool."

For Daniel Capalbo, the scandals that keep him busy and entertained are definitive proof that his country is "not serious"—a phrase that, like *carnaval carioca*, is one of the most damning ways Argentines can de-

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scribe a situation. Menem is not serious, Congress is not serious, the press, most particularly, is not serious, Capalbo told me when I visited him at *Noticias* back in May, and he added, by way of example, that the *Noticias* offices were a joke. Indeed, they were spectacularly shabby, particularly when one considered that the magazine was the largest-selling newsweekly around, its circulation having doubled in a year to a healthy hundred thousand per issue. Capalbo, who was editing *Noticias*' political section when I visited him, did not even have his own desk, and another reporter approached me to ask if it were true, as he had been told when he complained to his higher-ups about the phone system, that United States publications like *Time* and *Newsweek* also put out a magazine with the help of only twelve phone lines. Capalbo said that his salary at *Noticias* was "extremely high" by local standards—about fifteen hundred dollars a month—but in fact that doesn't go far in a country where a local phone call can cost two dollars.

In any case, it isn't money that makes Capalbo drag a little more urgently on his cigarette when he talks about the problems of the press. He wants to know how much time reporters in the United States have to work on their stories. It worries him that newspapers and magazines are telling the Menem stories because scandal is good business, and for no other reason. But he is not quite clear himself on the distinction between scandalmongering and muckraking, and he acknowledges as much: "Everything is so corrupt here that we have lost all sense of proportion; we have no parameters for judging a story's seriousness, or worth." Once the *Noticias* photographer had talked María Julia Alsogaray into posing sexily for the magazine, Capalbo feels, it had no choice but to put the picture on the cover—though doing so meant that a major investigative story the magazine had been readying all week was scrapped at the last minute to make room for the María Julia interview. I asked him about a cover story he had written for *Noticias* on the large number of unsupervised landing strips in the corruption-riddled province of Catamarca, next door to La Rioja. His story had stated flatly

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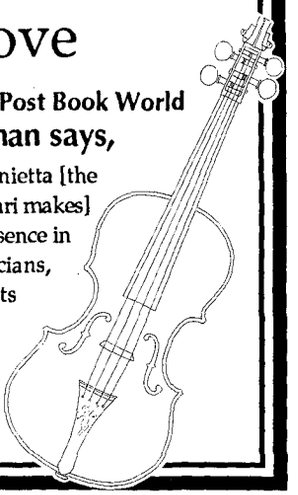

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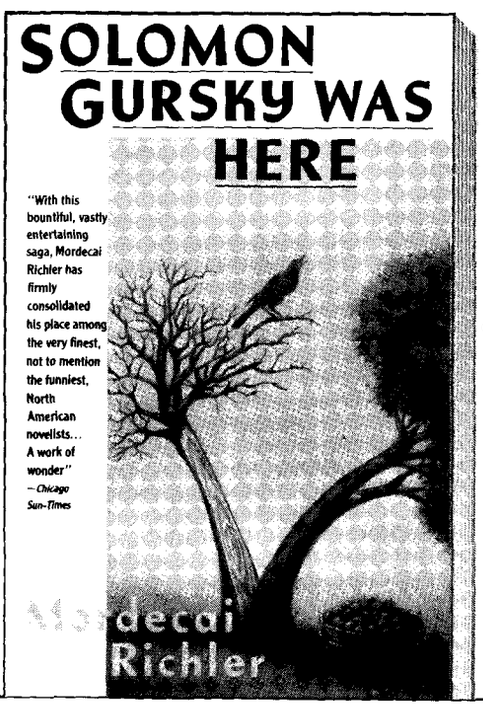
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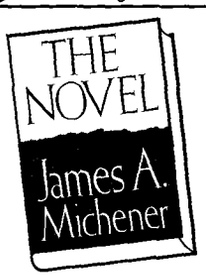

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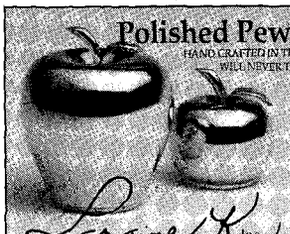

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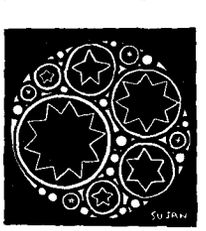
that those strips were being used for the trans-shipment of cocaine, and had described so clearly some of the persons alleged to be involved that it didn't make much difference that their names had been left out. I wanted to know if he was worried about a libel suit. "How could they sue?" he replied. "Everybody in Catamarca can tell you about the strips." And anyhow, he added, libel questions are routinely settled out of court, by means of an even exchange: a publication will react to a public figure's complaint about a nasty article by printing a favorable one forthwith. The real problem, he said, with some bitterness, is that he hasn't seen any of his stories having an effect. "Take the Catamarca issue. It got a lot of comment on the radio talk shows, but the talk wasn't about the story itself—any number of reporters had the same information. It was about the fact that we'd dared to print it."

Capalbo would like to take time off to think about all the stories he has covered since the military dictators released their grip on Argentina, and he would like to work somewhere where reporting is a "serious" activity. Like many of his colleagues, he has migrated through the available range of professional options in the last eight years without finding any of them particularly satisfying. He started at *La Razón*, moved to *Página/12* but found its salary difficult to live on, was tempted by the idea of being an editor at *Noticias* but was disappointed by the working conditions, and has now landed at *Clarín*, as the editor of a weekly political supplement. He was delighted by the professionalism he felt around him on his first day on the job, he told me, but he didn't want to set his hopes too high. "The renewal of hope is always followed by disappointment," he said. "That is why all of us journalists are itinerants." Even the publications seem transitory. With the exception of *Clarín* and *La Nación*, which is the second-largest daily, news publications seem to be in a constant state of flux. That great bastion of gossip *Gente* has seen its circulation wither, while that of the two-year-old *Noticias* has doubled. Timerman's *La Razón* folded, and *Página* bloomed. But, for all *Página's* energy and intelligence, it is hard to imagine the same irreverent publication coming out regularly for ten years—the minimum length of time one would think was necessary for it to consolidate as a newspaper. Fleetingness seems part of its charm.



The same thing might be said of democracy, except that Daniel Capalbo doesn't think he's really seen it yet. He's not quite sure what it is, but he has no doubt at all about what it isn't: it isn't impunity for torturers and killers, nor is it related to an economic system that increases rather than erases social inequality. One sees as very Argentine his inability to be satisfied with what are merely notable improvements over past aberrations, yet it's hard to disagree that life and politics in his country could be far better. Certain events that recur with obsessional predictability make it difficult to believe at times that Argentina can ever overcome its past. Right-wing terrorists, possible leftovers from the dictatorship's intelligence services, threaten human-rights activists and intimidate journalists. Jewish cemeteries are desecrated. The noted filmmaker Fernando Solanas, who is unswerving in his commitment to left-wing Peronism and extremely vocal in his disgust for Menem, was shot in both legs recently, presumably by enemies of Menem who would like to pin the blame on him. (No one, including Solanas, suspects the President.) These things are frightening and depressing, but not at all unfamiliar.

When Capalbo is pressed, though, he will admit that there are two areas of life here that look encouragingly like something a proper working democracy might rely on: one is the justice system, which, despite severe manpower problems, appears to be operating with increasing autonomy and self-confidence; and the other—for all its faults and limitations, he says—is the press. Once he has got started on this train of thought, his mood is brighter. "There's something else," he says. "Whatever Menem may think about what we write, nobody gets killed for it. There's no more official torture here, there are no more 'disappeared.' Whatever else may be happening, this is terribly, terribly important."

—Alma Guillermoprieto

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BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

NEVER DIE, by Barry Hannah (Houghton Mifflin; $18.95). After the uncharacteristic mildness of his last book, "Boomerang," this Mississippi author has returned to form—and gone West—in a stylish and absurdist chronicle of revenge, misery, and mayhem. It is set in a corrupt little South Texas frontier town, circa 1910, and it concerns the crippling of a caballero named Fernando Muré and his vow to burn down the iniquitous town. (A sub-theme is the promise of escape offered by newly invented forms of transportation: automobiles, motorcycles, and airplanes.) The other characters, almost all of them wicked, have names like Nitburg, Smoot, Fingo, and Nix, and as they wreak and suffer various forms of Jacobean havoc their crazed and swerving thoughts and dreams are conveyed in sentences that are lithe, surprising, and hilariously laconic. The spirit of Sam Peckinpah lurks in the elegiac violence and fatalism of this fabulist Western, but the silver-tongued prose is all Hannah.

THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING, by Lisa Grunwald (Knopf; $20). A "theory of everything"—one that will account for all that is known of the universe—is sought by physicists the way alchemists once sought the philosophers' stone. It is on that parallel that this readable novel of semi-ideas is founded. Alexander Simon formulates a headline-making theory of everything, and discovers his life to be empty. He therefore hooks up with a latter-day alchemist, only to find, like Dorothy when she wished to go home, that he already has the philosophers' stone. His dilemma is presented as a dichotomy between science and magic which equals the split between his science-teacher father and his mother, who left them, in search of supernatural phenomena, when Alexander was eleven. Naturally, such story as there is consists in dissolving the apparent dichotomy. If, however, Alexander is after purity of soul to counter the emptiness of worldly ambition, he is in the wrong hands: the author works the trick without the beauties of logic or magic, and with all the glib convenience of craft.

GENERAL

OUR AGE: ENGLISH INTELLECTUALS BETWEEN THE WORLD WARS—A GROUP PORTRAIT, by Noel Annan (Random House; $30). This humane history surveys the author's generation (he entered Cambridge in 1935), drawing on his own recollections of books and of men. He specifically limits himself to the influential alumni of Oxford, Cambridge, and the London School of Economics, and reminds us that half of this generation—its women—were not expected or encouraged to seek careers, power, or influence. While he does find consensus—notably agreement about the errors of the preceding generation—he describes a wide range of beliefs within a group that produced Catholic novelists, Communist spies, and assorted Conservatives, Liberals, and Socialists. Mr. Annan's style is so easy and his mind so subtle that he never calls attention to himself. He is perhaps at his most impressive in portraying men or movements he disagreed with, and presenting their aims or merits; he is equally wise in imparting his sense of his generation's misjudgments and its surprise at being judged by the next generation.

THE INSECT WORLD OF J. HENRI FABRE, translated from the French by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos (Beacon; $29 cloth, $12.95 paper). "It is nearly always unexpectedly, when your thoughts are elsewhere engaged, that the Sphex appears, dragging her Ephippiger behind her," wrote J. Henri Fabre, who was known as the Insect's Homer. Born in France in 1823, and self-taught, Fabre was the preëminent entomologist of his time, but this designation barely suggests the vivacity of his prose, the passion he brought to his observations, or his unforgettable bits of information (when a wasp washes her eyes, it's a sign that she is giving up on a job). Fabre chanced on his calling as a boy, and, like the insects he describes—the Great Peacock and Psyche Moths, the Burying-Beetles, and the Snail-Shell Bee, to name just a few—he made an industry of his instincts. This selection, culled from his majestic ten-volume work, "Souvenirs Entomologiques," both startles and enchants; through it, and by means of the superb translation, the reader gets to know not only the insects but the naturalist himself.

ENTRANCES AND EXITS: A LIFE IN AND OUT OF THE THEATRE, by Norris Houghton (Limelight; $29.95). In his ninth decade, the author retains the critical enthusiasm—the mixture of irreverence and infatuation—that he took into the theatre some sixty years ago. Mr. Houghton, who has done nearly everything except write a play, had a gift for turning up where the action was: he went from Princeton to the University Players, the troupe that started Henry Fonda, Joshua Logan, James Stewart, and Margaret Sullavan (among others) on their careers, and then, after a short spell on Broadway, proceeded to Moscow to learn how Stanislavsky and Meierhold (among others) staged plays. He also created the action: in the fifties, he and T. Edward Hambleton founded and managed the Phoenix Theatre, one of the earliest Off Broadway companies, whose productions glow in theatrical history. Mr. Houghton is a fine raconteur, who brings to his storytelling both perspective on the past and a sense of fun.

NOTE: "What Work Is," a collection of poems by Philip Levine, has been published by Knopf ($19). Some of the poems first appeared in *The New Yorker*.

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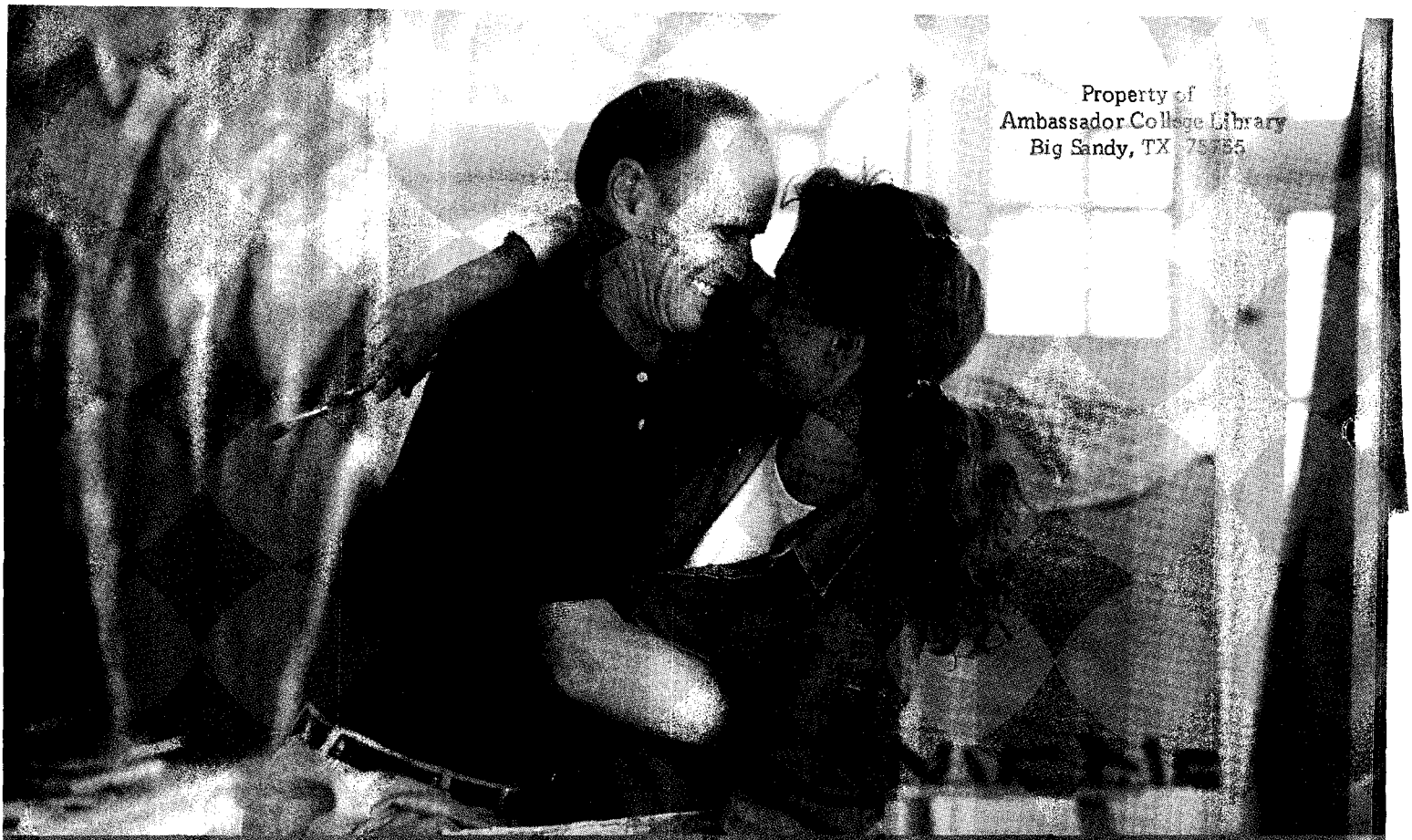
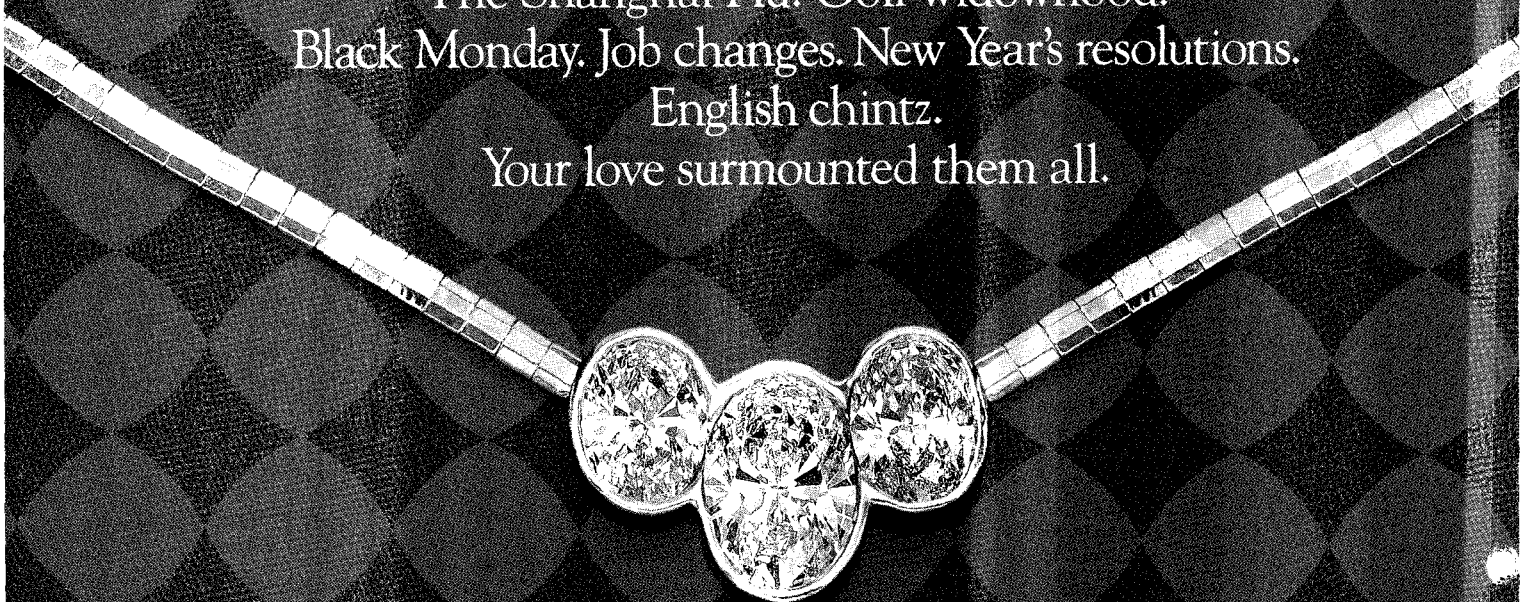


Pet turtles. Pet rocks.
Christmas train sets. In-laws. Teenage outlaws.
The Shanghai Flu. Golf widowhood.
Black Monday. Job changes. New Year's resolutions.
English chintz.
Your love surmounted them all.



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